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12 fresh ideas for  
green beans

## updating classic fruit desserts

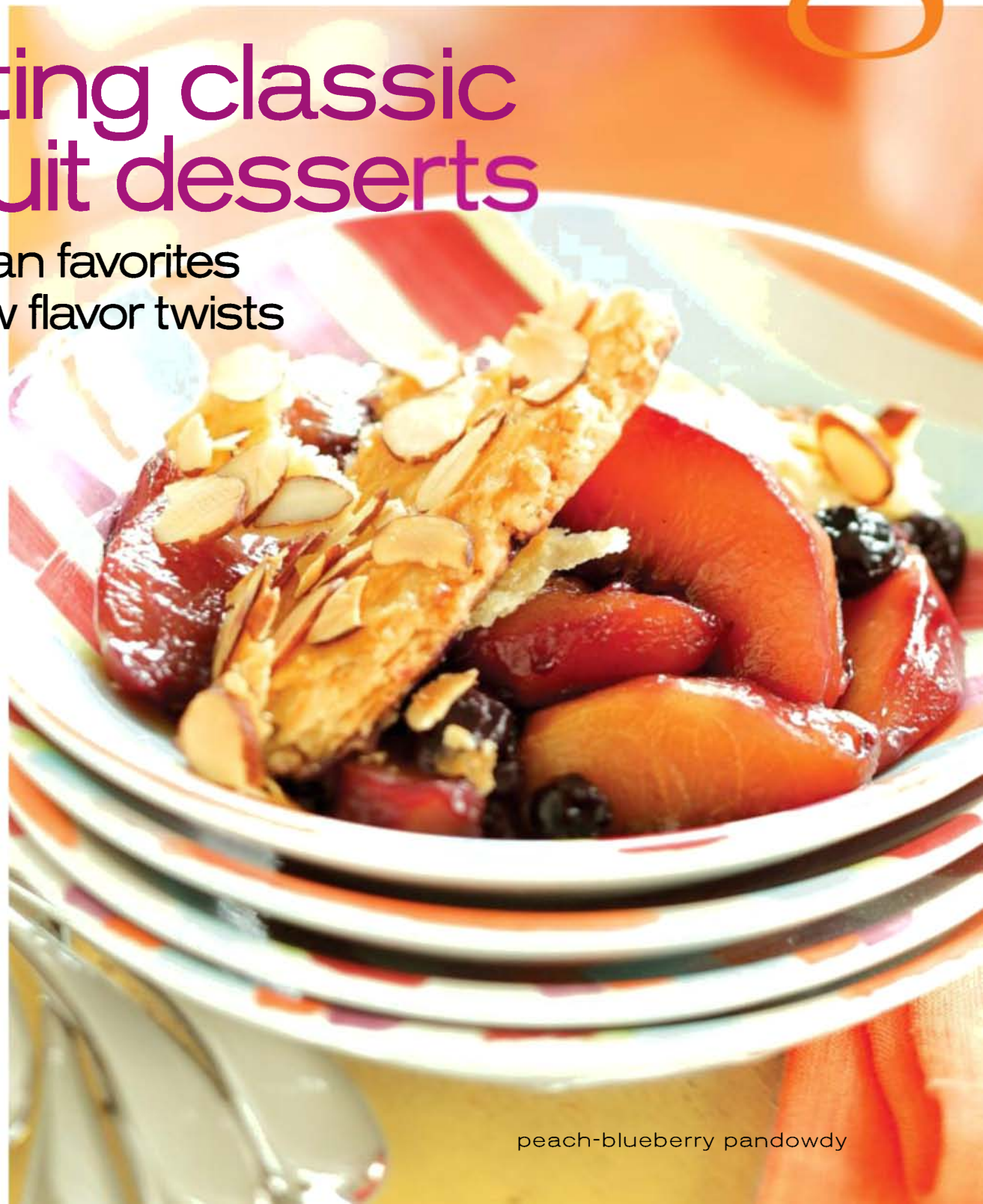
American favorites  
with new flavor twists

**grilling pizza  
for a party**

**crisp chicken-  
arugula salad**

**pestos: basil  
& beyond**

**how to roast  
tomatoes and  
use them a  
dozen ways**



SEPTEMBER 2004 NO. 66  
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peach-blueberry pandowdy

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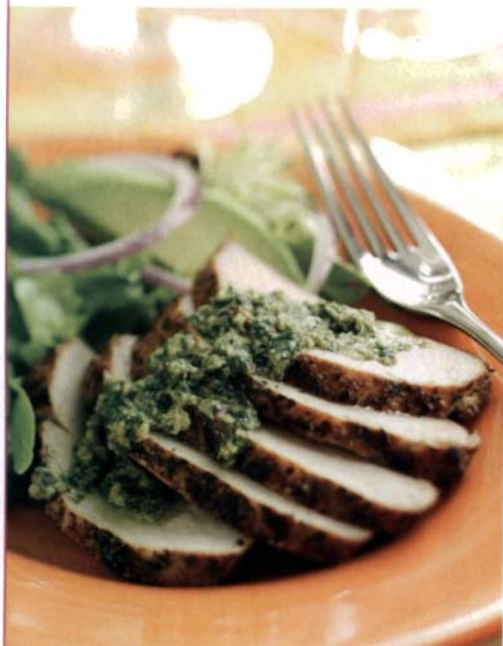
# fine Cooking

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2004 ISSUE 66



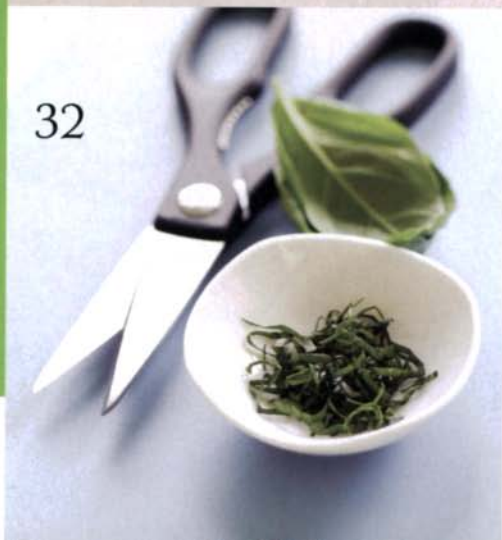
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82C Quick & Delicious



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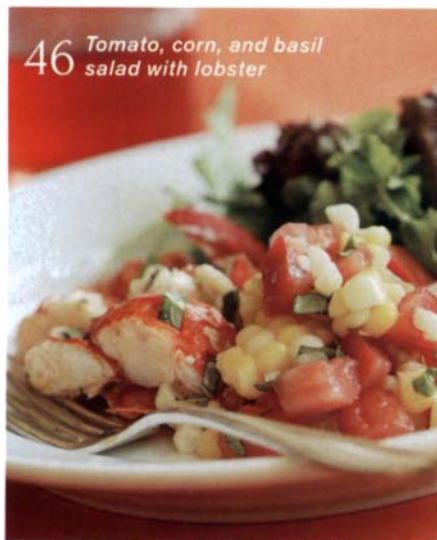
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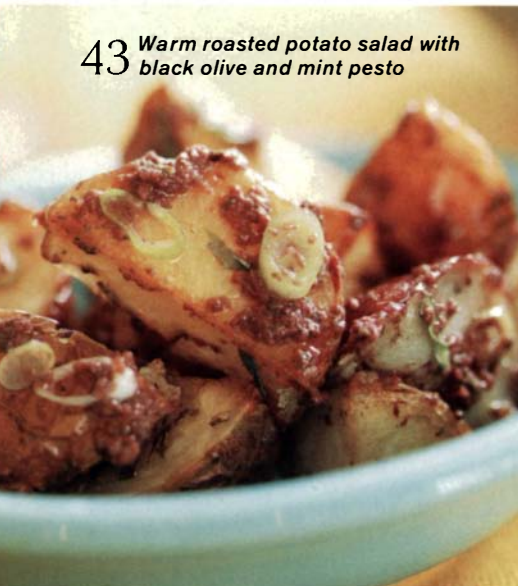
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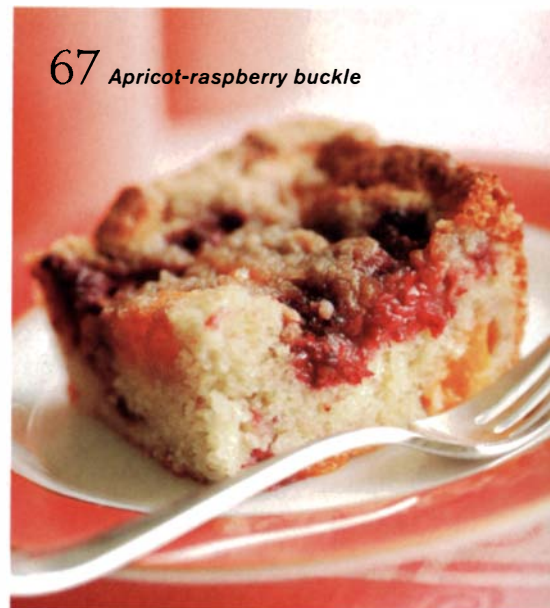
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# Easy Summer Entertaining

**L**ate summer is a time for casual outdoor entertaining, and we've got the perfect menu for the moment: Our grilled pizza party (p. 34) can't help but loosen up a crowd as guests create and grill their own pizzas. Since all the components are made ahead, you'll be able to hang out and relax right along with your friends. We've also assembled

a few other menu options plus a couple of quick week-night dinner ideas. But don't let this be the limit—you'll discover many other mix-and-match opportunities among the recipes in this issue. Just remember to check the yield on each recipe, as you may need to double or halve it to suit your needs.

—the editors

## Grilled Pizza Party

### the menu

Romaine and red leaf salad with Lemon-Sherry Vinaigrette with Roasted Tomato Oil, p. 61

Grilled Pizza, p. 36, topped with Basil Pesto, p. 39, Roasted Vidalia Onions, p. 39, Slow-Roasted Summer Tomatoes, p. 60, and mozzarella

Spiced Peach-Blueberry Pandowdy, p. 66, or Plum Grunt with Swirled Biscuit Topping, p. 65

### wine choices

A grilled pizza party calls for easy-sipping wines that pair well with a wide range of flavors. Many crisp whites and rosés would work, as well as fruity reds.

For white wines, pick a Pinot Grigio or Sauvignon Blanc with juicy fruit and little or no oak. The 2002 Marco Felluga Pinot Grigio (\$14) from northern Italy or 2003 Matua Valley Sauvignon Blanc (\$14) from New Zealand are each delicious.

Another great choice would be dry rosé, one of the most food-flexible of all wines. I especially like the 2003 Charles Melton Rose of Virginia (\$15) from Australia.

If you want to serve red wine, look for a young red with vibrant fruit and little oak and tannin. The 2001 Peachy Canyon "Incredible Red" Zinfandel Bin 113 (\$12) from California and the 2002 Penfolds Thomas Hyland Shiraz (\$15) from Australia are both long on succulent fruit and flavor. (Retail prices are approximate.)

*Tim Gaiser, a master sommelier, is a contributing editor for Fine Cooking.*

## Low-Stress Entertaining Menu

Walnut-Parsley Pesto, p. 40, with raw vegetables

Lamb Chops Crusted with Fennel & Black Pepper, p. 82C

Balsamic Portabella Salad with Goat Cheese, p. 82C

Apricot-Raspberry Buckle, p. 67

## Simple but Special Lobster Lunch

Grilled or toasted crusty bread spread with Roasted Garlic, p. 39, and drizzled with extra-virgin olive oil

Tomato, Corn & Basil Salad with Lobster, p. 46

Raspberry & Blackberry Mousse, p. 52

## Sunday Supper with an Italian Flair

Chicken Milanese, p. 49

Tortellini with Artichokes, Roasted Peppers & Olives, p. 82C

Amaretti cookies with vanilla gelato

## Two Quick Dinner Pairings

**1** Grilled Pork Tenderloin with Salsa Verde, p. 82C

Warm Roasted Potato Salad with Black Olive & Mint Pesto, p. 43

**2** Broiled Pork Chops with Sun-Dried Tomato & Chipotle Pesto, p. 44

Simply Delicious Green Beans, p. 18, mixed with cherry tomatoes



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from the editor

# Hot & Fast, or Low & Slow?

I'm a high-heat cooking kind of gal. I love grilling, I'll roast anything, and when it comes to sautéing, the more Btu the better. I can trace the roots of this fiery obsession back to my first cooking job after culinary school. At Al Forno restaurant in Providence, Rhode Island, chef-owners George Germon and Johanne Killeen built tremendous wood-fired brick ovens and grills, and that's where I learned to grill pizzas and to roast vegetables and meats in (and over) 600°F heat. I loved it—even though I did singe the hair on my arms every time I reached in the oven.

Although cooking with high heat is thrilling, even I realize that some things can't be rushed. Not only is cooking low and slow a bit more relaxing, but it can also unlock some pretty amazing flavors and textures. Take, for instance, classic pulled-pork barbecue—for a fall-apart-tender roast with great smoky flavor, only gentle cooking and a low fire will do. Follow Elizabeth Karmel's indirect grilling guide on p. 54, and you'll get great results. Likewise, the intensely flavored slow-roasted tomatoes on p. 59 need time to develop their deeply caramelized flavor and meaty texture. But neither the roasted tomatoes nor the pork barbecue requires a lot of hands-on time—which means low and slow actually makes sense for summertime cooking.

So this August, throw a grilled pizza party one day (learn all the basics and get a great make-ahead plan, too, from Boston chef Frank McClelland on p. 34), and relax over a pork barbecue picnic on another. Or try one of our other quick menu ideas (see Menus, p. 8), and don't forget dessert—that cool berry mousse on p. 50 is the perfect antidote to all that heat.

—Susie Middleton, editor

## Rotisserie magic, without the infrared burner

As a charter subscriber of *Fine Cooking*, I enjoy your advice and the articles. In the "Guide to Buying a Gas Grill" in *FC* #65, however, I think you erred in suggesting that "a rotisserie requires a rear infrared

burner..." I use an add-on rotisserie on my three-burner grill following the exact procedure the article gave for roasting with indirect grilling, turning off the burner directly underneath the spit. I successfully spit-roast boned, herb-stuffed pork shoulders, arguably the

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fattiest meat you can cook. This inexpensive treat has made my reputation at community dinners at the Annapolis Quilt Guild. (My quilting wouldn't do it!) The thermometer on the lid of the grill helps me adjust the front and back burners to the target 350°F temperature for spit roasting.

For checking the meat temperature, I find that an old-fashioned nail-type meat thermometer left in the thick part of the roast works faster than an instant-read thermometer for my quick progress checks. A shoulder takes about five hours to roast in my Weber Genesis Silver B. It also cooks lovely bone-in turkey in two hours and a whole chicken in about an hour.

Incidentally, wind has never been a problem in my grill, which doesn't blow out like an infrared burner. I agree with the caution of "no flame under the meat," but with that warning, twirl away!

—Kathy Kelm,  
Annapolis, Maryland

### A chip tip for chocolate cake

The Bourbon Chocolate Cake in the "Dinner with Friends" story in *Fine Cooking* #64 (p. 66) was fabulous!

I was a little intimidated at first, but the result was magnificent. I used the parchment trick you suggested to make the pan taller, but I think it would be easier to have the 9x3-inch pan. One tip to pass along to your readers: I used Trader Joe's semi-sweet chocolate chips instead of bar chocolate—they had good

Here's the place to share your thoughts on our recent articles or your food and cooking philosophies. Send your comments to Letters, *Fine Cooking*, PO Box 5506, Newtown, CT 06470-5506, or by email to [fc@taunton.com](mailto:fc@taunton.com).

## on our Web site...

Check out *Fine Cooking* on the Web for the latest developments in our recipe contest and for a peek inside the gas grills we cooked on to research last issue's gas grill buyer's guide. And to celebrate our tenth anniversary year, we're still featuring our "Top Ten" lists, for potato recipes, chicken recipes, cooking tips, and more. It's all at [www.finecooking.com](http://www.finecooking.com).

—the editors

flavor, and I didn't have to chop them. Now I'm going to try the rest of the menu this weekend.

—Paula Taylor,  
San Diego, California

### Thai tuna salad, instead of beef

I love your magazine and have been a subscriber for ten years. About five years ago I stopped eating red meat, which limited the recipes I could use from your magazine. I made the Thai Beef Salad with Mint & Cilantro (*Fine Cooking* #64, p. 32) using tuna steak instead of beef, and it was delicious. Other readers who don't eat red meat may want this tip. Any time you feature recipes using meat, where there is a good substitute like this, it would be great to have this option. Thanks for producing an excellent magazine.

—Barbara Wolfe, via email

### Cream cheese has less fat

In the lattice pie story in *Fine Cooking* #65, we stated that cream cheese has more fat than butter when actually the opposite is true. Cream cheese contains half the fat as an equivalent amount of butter.

—the editors ♦



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Contributing editor **Tony Rosenfeld** ("Pestos," p. 40) learned to make many of Italy's regional pestos during a six-month restaurant apprenticeship in Rome. "Pestos are great for summer meals," he says. "I'll make one at the beginning of the week, and then work it into other dinners throughout the week." A food writer and restaurant consultant, Tony helped create and develop the menu for "b.good," a new healthy fast-food restaurant in Boston.



Elizabeth Karmel



Lori Longbotham



Jennifer McLagan

**Jean-Pierre Moullé** ("Chef vs. Chef," p. 45) was the executive chef at Chez Panisse in Berkeley, California, for more than twenty years and has contributed to several Chez Panisse cookbooks. Jean-Pierre still works with the restaurant as a consultant and divides his time between Berkeley and Bordeaux, where he and his wife lead culinary and cultural tours of France.

**Pascal Sauton** ("Chef vs. Chef," p. 45) is the chef-owner of Carafe restaurant in Portland, Oregon. A native of Paris, Pascal apprenticed at Lasserre, the renowned three-star restaurant, before setting out to cook in places as diverse as French Guyana, New York City, Denver, and finally Portland. Pascal works closely with local organic farmers and producers and writes his menus around daily deliveries of meat, fish, and produce.

When cookbook author and avid traveler **Lori Longbotham** ("Chicken Milanese," p. 48) returns from abroad, she tends to bring home recipes and cooking tech-

niques as souvenirs. One of her favorite discoveries is la cotoletta Milanese, a crisp cutlet topped with a pile of zesty greens and tomatoes. "It's truly a classic dish—so simple and so elegant," she says. Lori has been developing recipes and writing about food for 25 years.

Australian **Jennifer McLagan** ("Summer Berry Mousse," p. 50) is a chef, food stylist, and writer who now lives in Toronto. Jennifer has lived on several continents, but it's France that remains her biggest single food influence, and she makes several trips a year there to cook and eat. Jennifer is at work on her first cookbook, due out from William Morrow in the fall of 2005.

**Elizabeth Karmel** ("Barbecued Pork," p. 54) has barbecue in her blood. The North Carolina native keeps her barbecue expertise fresh while teaching across the country, working as a Kansas City Barbecue Society judge, acting as a member of the Memphis and May barbecue team,

During the summer, **Frank McClelland** ("Grilled Pizza Party," p. 34) spends most of his free nights around his patio grill on Boston's North Shore. In addition to pizzas, Frank is apt to grill up striped bass or lobsters that he's caught that same day. Frank is the chef and owner of L'Espalier, the acclaimed Boston mainstay that's garnered countless awards over the last 15 years. Although the restaurant specializes in elegant French fare, Frank traces his passion for food back to his youth, growing up on his grandparents' farm in New Hampshire.



and running her own company, Girls at the Grill. Her cookbook, *Grill Friends: One Girl's Guide to Taming the Flame*, will be published in the spring of 2005.

**Susie Middleton** ("Slow-Roasted Tomatoes," p. 59) has grilled, roasted, sautéed, simmered, and gratinéed potatoes, squash, beets, sweet potatoes, zucchini, eggplant, and dozens of other vegetables for the pages of *Fine Cooking*. But roasting tomatoes may just be her favorite technique of all. "So little effort, such delicious alchemy," she says. Susie is the editor of *Fine Cooking*.

**Greg Patent** discovered a wonderful variety of old-fashioned desserts (p. 62) while researching his book, *Baking in America*, which won a James Beard award. Greg is a cookbook author, food journalist, cooking teacher, and radio host. He's working on a cookbook that celebrates America's immigrant baking heritage.



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# bountiful snap beans

BY RUTH LIVELY

A green bean goes by many names. Sometimes it's called a snap bean, because it can be broken or snapped to length. And sometimes it's called a string bean, since it used to have strings running down both sides. But happily, most green beans these days are stringless, and they aren't even necessarily green. Purple and yellow bean pods liven up the mix and the garden as well—although, sadly, purple beans change to green during cooking. These fresh edible pods come in different shapes, too: the standard round pods, the extra-thin French filet beans, and flat-pod Italian beans (also called Romano beans).

**No matter what you call them, snap beans are delicious cooked many ways.** They're terrific simply steamed or boiled, but they're also good braised, sautéed, roasted—even grilled. The elegantly thin filet bean is the classic type for steaming or boiling and serving whole. Broad Italian beans have great beany flavor and can also be cooked quickly when young, but the larger ones are ideal for braising, stewing, and roasting. Good flavor matches for all beans include cured pork (think bacon and pancetta); onion, shallots, and garlic; anchovies; lemon zest; dill, tarragon, mint, summer savory, or chervil.

At my house, green beans are the summer garden's alternative to lettuce. When the garden is pumping out beans, some version of an easy and versatile bean salad appears at dinner several times a week. But there are many other tempting ways to use a mess of beans (see the ideas on p. 18).

*Clockwise from top: Filet beans, purple beans, green beans, Dragon's Tongue wax beans, yellow wax beans.*

## in the garden

Snap beans come in both bush and pole varieties. Bush beans produce beans over about a three-week period; to have beans all summer, you'll need to make successive sowings. Pole beans, on the other hand, continue for many weeks once they start cropping, so you get a much bigger harvest from one planting. As the name implies, pole beans need support—a rough pole, a trellis, or a teepee.

Among round-pod beans, 'Kentucky Wonder', 'Blue Lake', and 'Kentucky Blue' are famous for flavor. 'Provider' is extra early. Yellow and purple beans are easier to spot than green ones, a big asset when harvesting. I've had good success with filet beans 'Vernandon' and 'Nickel'. The flat-pod pole bean 'Romano' is my hands-down favorite (for seed sources, see p. 78).





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## green bean inspiration

**Add green beans to a warm potato salad** made with small red-skinned potatoes. Toss with chopped shallots and a creamy mustard vinaigrette.

**Stir up a flavorful sauté** of snap beans, slivered onion, sliced mushrooms, chopped garlic, olive oil, salt, and pepper. Add a dash of balsamic vinegar at the end.

**Mix a colorful bean salad** of cooked green and yellow snap beans with chickpeas and diced raw onion, celery, and bell pepper. Marinate in a sweet-sour vinaigrette. Just before serving, toss with chopped fresh chervil or mint.

**Simmer up some Southern-style beans.** Cut green or flat-pod beans into 2-inch lengths and slowly simmer with diced onion, diced bacon (or a ham hock or a bit of salt pork), and freshly ground black pepper. Toward the end of cooking, taste and add a splash of cider or malt vinegar, and a bit of salt if necessary.

**Drizzle tender, cooked whole beans with a tangy yogurt sauce** flavored with mint, dill, or cardamom and spiked with a dash of cayenne.

**Compose a beautiful salade niçoise.** Steam or boil whole filet or small green beans just until tender. Cover a platter with a bed of tender butter lettuce leaves and top with the cooked beans, tomato wedges, quartered

hard-cooked eggs, and chunked cooked or canned tuna. Garnish with a scattering of whole black olives and anchovy fillets. Serve with a well-seasoned lemon-chive vinaigrette.

**Braise fully grown beans in savory stock.** Brown the beans lightly in olive oil, season with salt and pepper, and then simmer, covered, in a little chicken stock until the beans are fully tender and the stock is reduced to a syrupy glaze.

**If you have just a handful of beans...**

**Cook them until al dente and add to a crudité platter.** They're delicious dunked into hummus, herbed yogurt dip, garlicky aioli, or a pungent anchovy sauce.

**Add whole or cut cooked beans to a salad.** My favorite combination is slivered endive leaves, green beans, and sliced red radishes in a mustardy vinaigrette.

**Or simply tuck the cooked beans among slices of tomatoes** and drizzle with olive oil.

**Add short pieces of uncooked beans to soup or risotto,** or sauté them and add to a frittata.

**Make a succotash** by cutting green beans into tiny pieces and blanching; sauté briefly with corn kernels in butter and add chives and a touch of cream.

### Simply Delicious Green Beans

*Serves four as a side dish.*

To really enjoy the fresh flavor of green beans, cook them just until tender (don't undercook or overcook) and dress them simply with your best olive oil and plenty of sea salt. Then, if you feel like gussying up the dish, add a flavorful extra or two (see the ideas at right).

**1 pound fresh, tender green beans**  
**1½ tablespoons best-quality extra-virgin olive oil**  
**¼ teaspoon fleur de sel or other medium-grain sea salt; more to taste**

Bring a pot of water to boil over high heat. Rinse the beans and trim away their stems. Boil the beans just until tender, 4 to 5 minutes for regular green beans, less for extra-thin filet beans. Drain well. Spread the beans on a platter or shallow serving dish. If there is still water clinging to them, let them dry briefly. While the beans are still hot,

drizzle with the olive oil. Toss gently with your hands or two serving forks, turning the beans until they're evenly coated with oil. Sprinkle with sea salt, toss, and serve warm.

#### EXTRAS:

If you like, add:

- ❖ a little creamy goat cheese
- ❖ slivered sun-dried tomatoes
- ❖ quartered cherry tomatoes
- ❖ grated lemon or orange zest
- ❖ sliced green onions
- ❖ blanched corn kernels
- ❖ quartered pitted olives
- ❖ paper-thin slices of radish
- ❖ shredded endive or radicchio
- ❖ toasted pine nuts or almonds
- ❖ fresh mint or chervil leaves

Add the extras while the beans are still warm and toss everything thoroughly with plenty of the olive oil and salt.

Ruth Lively gardens, cooks, and writes in New Haven, Connecticut. ♦

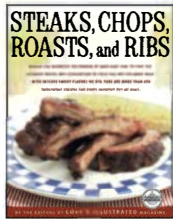


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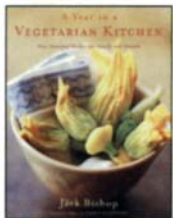
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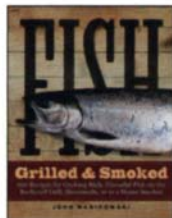
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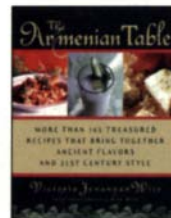
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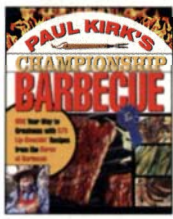
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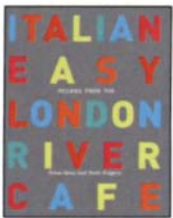
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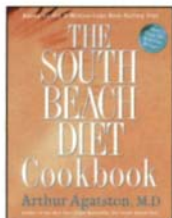
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BY REBBECA FREEDMAN



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What cook doesn't like having fresh herbs on hand? We certainly do, and since herbs don't stay perky and green for long, the promise of this "herb keeper" boosted our hopes. We put the container to the test and were pleasantly surprised at how well it preserved our herbs, which stayed fresh and bright for weeks in the fridge. It's easy to use; just add water to the indicator line, submerge the herb stems, and replace the lid. *Fresh Herb Keeper*, \$14.25 at [KitchenKrafts.com](http://KitchenKrafts.com) (800-776-0575).



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Step 1:

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Step 2:

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acceptance  
speech.



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YIELDS 8 SERVINGS

- 1 package (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened
- 1/3 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 box (2.8 oz.) NESTLÉ EUROPEAN STYLE Mousse Mix, Dark Chocolate
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1 (6 oz.) prepared graham cracker crust
- 2 cups whipped cream
- 1 cup fresh, sliced fruit or berries

*BEAT* cream cheese and sour cream in large mixer bowl until smooth. Add sugar and vanilla; beat until smooth. *BEAT* mousse mix and milk in small mixer bowl until lighter in color and smooth. Fold into cream cheese mixture; spoon into crust. *REFRIGERATE* for 4 hours or until firm. To serve, garnish with whipped cream and fruit.



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READER SERVICE NO. 83





Flat bamboo skewers make sturdier kebabs

Standard wooden or metal skewers can be tricky for grilling: vegetables and meats can spin around on them, making kebabs unwieldy. We like these wide, flat, 12-inch bamboo skewers from Charcoal Companion because they stabilize skewered meats and vegetables, ensuring more evenly cooked kebabs. *Extra-Wide Bamboo Skewers*, \$4.95 for 25, at *Sur La Table* (800-243-0852; [www.surlatable.com](http://www.surlatable.com)).



### Tea-smoked sea salt

We were instantly intrigued by this coarse salt's strikingly deep, smoky aroma, which comes from infusing the salt with smoke from cherry and maple wood, tea, and spices. It's the perfect seasoning for grilled or roasted chicken, fish, or vegetables; we especially liked it with grilled shrimp. *Vann's tea-smoked salt*, \$8 for 4 ounces, at *La Cuisine* ([www.lacuisineus.com](http://www.lacuisineus.com); 800-521-1176).



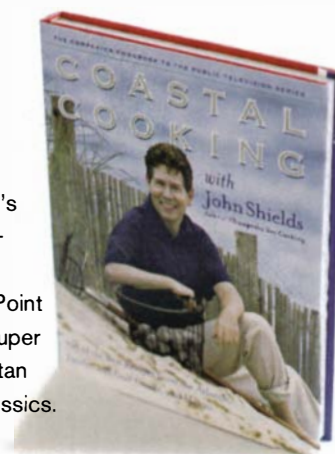
### A spicy sauce that's still fruity

This French hot sauce is made with red peppers from the Espelette area. Despite the sauce's heat, the peppers' fruity flavor shines through. Try combining the sauce with a rub for poultry or meats, or stir it into a pan sauce or a summer salsa. *Crème de Piment D'Espelette*, \$8.99 for 90 grams at *Chefshop.com* (877-337-2491).

### BOOK REVIEWS

#### Cooking coastal cuisine

*Coastal Cooking with John Shields* (\$32.50) is a cookbook, of course, but also a chronicle of Shields's culinary odyssey through America's waterfront communities. Among the recipes are local favorites like Mission Street Fish Taquitos, Paw Paw's Windmill Point Peel & Eat Shrimp, and Lauderdale-by-the-Sea Grouper Reuben, as well as superlative renditions of Manhattan clam chowder, shrimp creole, and other regional classics.



#### Simple food, alla romana

You don't have to travel to the Eternal City to eat as the Romans do. Just buy the freshest, tastiest ingredients possible, get out a pasta pot and a skillet, and then let your ingredients run the show. You'll find all the guidance you need in Suzanne Dunaway's delightful new book *Rome at Home* (\$29.95). An American with an insider's knowledge of Rome, she offers a trove of thoughtfully written recipes that can be put together in the time it takes to boil water for pasta.

—Kimberly Y. Masibay, associate editor





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READER SERVICE NO. 15

## Why does chicken stock become gelatinous when chilled? Does this indicate a high fat content?

—Anthony Payne, via e-mail

**A** Shirley O. Corriher responds: No, this consistency isn't a result of the stock's fat content, but rather a result of simmering chicken bones, cartilage, and tendons. Simmering releases collagen, one of the major protein structures in an animal's body, which boils down into gelatin. This natural gelatinous quality is a sign of good stock, which will make tasty soups, as well as sauces and stews with good body. Certain parts of the chicken—including the back, neck, and wings—have more collagen and will make for a more gelatinous chicken stock. Chilling the stock in turn helps the collagen's loose network of protein molecules set into a gel.

*Shirley O. Corriher is the author of CookWise.*

tain more essential oils. Just hang the leftover herbs by their stems in a cool, dark place.

*Renee Shepherd is a longtime gardening cook. Her company, Renee's Garden, offers gourmet seed packets at independent nurseries nationwide.*

## Is there a difference between the grill fires you get from hardwood charcoal as opposed to briquettes?

—Ben Stenholm, via email

**A** Bruce Aidells replies: When cooking over a charcoal fire, there are two aspects to consider: temperature and flavor.

In my experience, hardwood charcoal tends to burn hotter than briquettes. The hardwood charcoal with which I'm most familiar is mesquite, which tends to burn even longer and hotter than other hardwood charcoals I've tried. (The heat can be managed by letting the fire die down before you start cooking, by building a fire with varying zones of heat intensity, or both). Briquettes, on the other hand, are made of sawdust, binder, and other filler. Some are impregnated with chemical starter, which I avoid at all costs.

There's no doubt that grilling brings a smoky char to food, but the intensity of the smokiness depends ultimately on the length of time the food spends cooking over the fire. If it's an intense flavor of wood smoke you're after, cook the food low and slow over a fire built with hardwood charcoal, and add a handful of wood chips soaked in water to the fire. Wood chips are sold especially for grilling (for sources, see p. 78), and you usually add them just before you plan to start cooking the food.

*Bruce Aidells wrote The Complete Meat Cookbook. ♦*

## Do certain potatoes turn green more quickly than others?

—Sarah Solomon,  
New York, New York

**A** Molly Stevens responds: All potatoes will develop a greenish tinge under their skin if left exposed to natural or artificial light for too long, and this occurs more quickly with some potatoes than others. The most vulnerable potatoes are the thin-skinned ones, including white potatoes, new potatoes, and some heirloom varieties. More rugged, thick-skinned potatoes, like russets, can fend off the effects of light longer. (To test if a potato is thin- or thick-skinned, scratch it with your thumbnail; if the skin scrapes off easily, you've got a thin-skinned potato.)

No matter what type of potatoes you buy, it's important to store them in a dark place, like a drawer or inside a paper bag. If any green appears under a potato's skin, it should be peeled off or cut away. The greenish tinge contains a mildly toxic alkaloid, known as solanine. Although

you'd have to consume a lot of solanine to become sick, it does taste bitter and is best avoided.

*Molly Stevens, a contributing editor to Fine Cooking, is a co-author of One Potato, Two Potato.*

## I always have more fresh herbs than I can use up. Can fresh herbs be frozen? How?

—Gloria Shugrue, via email

**A** Renee Shepherd responds: Freezing works best with delicate herbs that don't taste very good when dried, such as basil, dill, chives, chervil, and parsley. Just chop the herbs, portion them generously into ice-cube trays, and add a little chicken broth. The frozen herb cubes are a great way to add a flavor lift to vegetable sautés, rice pilafs, noodles, or soups. I do this with mint, too, but I use water instead of chicken broth so I can add the mint to iced tea and other cold drinks. Resinous herbs such as rosemary, thyme, sage, and oregano keep better dried because they con-

Do you have a question of general interest about cooking? Send it to Q&A, *Fine Cooking*, PO Box 5506, Newtown, CT 06470-5506, or by email to [fc@taunton.com](mailto:fc@taunton.com), and we'll find a cooking professional with the answer.



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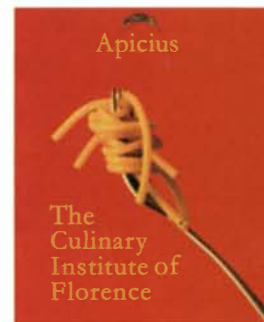
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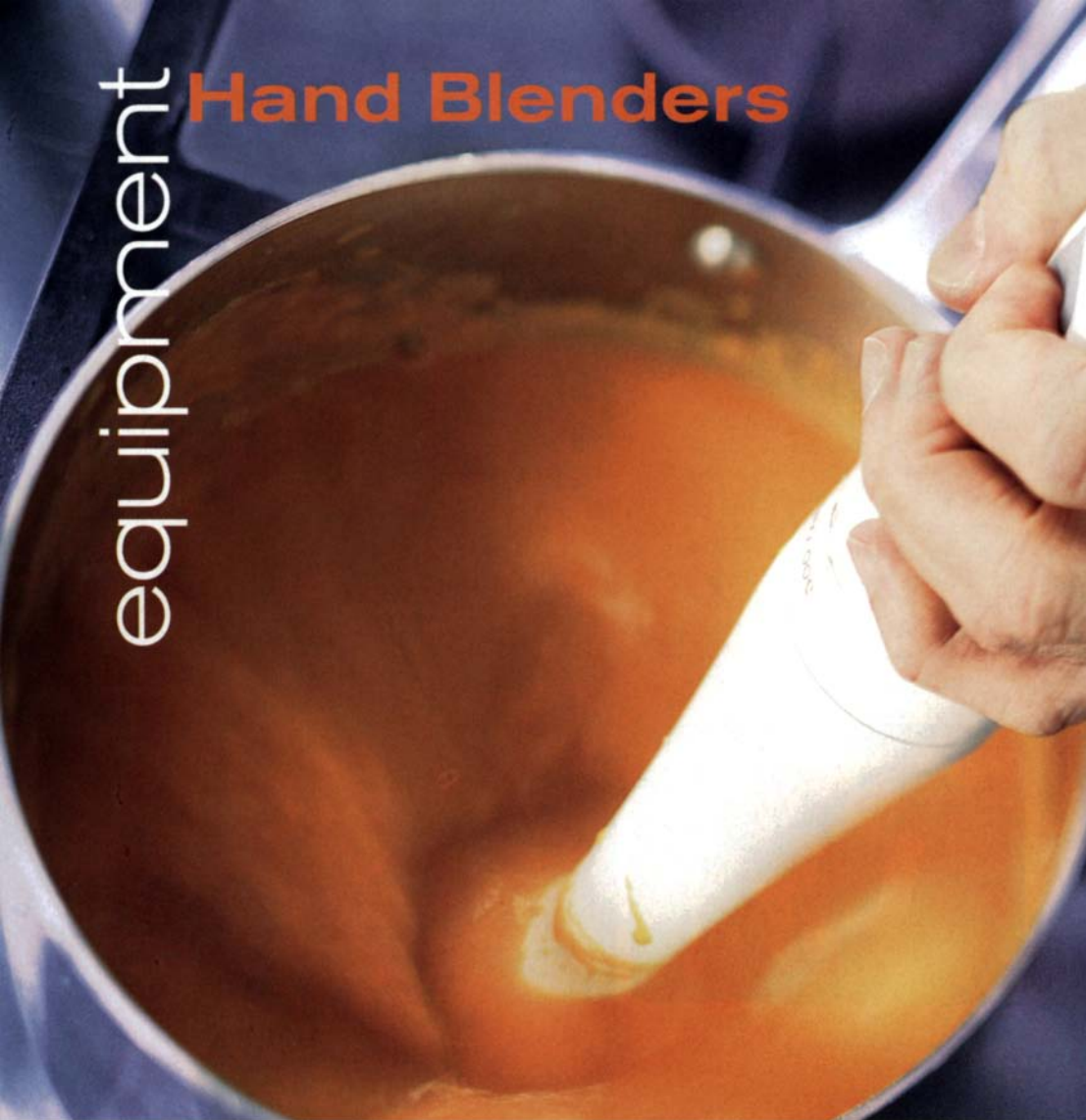
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# equipment **Hand Blenders**



The best models outshine countertop blenders in both speed and convenience

BY JOANNE BOUKNIGHT

I never thought of a hand blender as a kitchen staple, but after testing sixteen of them for this review, I've changed my mind. A good-quality hand blender (a.k.a. an immersion or stick blender) is now my first choice tool for puréeing soups, emulsifying vinaigrettes and mayonnaise, making applesauce and pesto, and blending smoothies.

These tasks can all be handled by a regular blender or a food processor, but a hand blender can be used on the spot—right in the pot, glass, or measuring cup—and it's much easier to clean.

A hand blender is a fairly simple appliance. A motor on top rotates a metal shaft that's

attached to a blade on the bottom. The blade is protected by a shield with holes or scallops that let liquid pass through. To operate, you immerse the shaft in a container, depress and hold the power button on top, and move the blender up, down, and around to purée. Although hand blenders have roughly half the horsepower of the average countertop blender, the good ones are just as effective, able to roil a pot of food like a tornado. And if you've ever had to jiggle your countertop blender to get it to purée evenly, you'll appreciate the maneuverability of the hand blender, which makes it easy to chase down rogue chunks of food. *(Continued)*

What a hand blender can do for you

**Sauces:** Make lump-free gravy quickly, and purée fresh or canned tomatoes into sauce in seconds. Emulsified sauces like mayonnaise and vinaigrettes are a snap with a hand blender.

**Puréed Soups:** Any vegetable or bean soup is a prime candidate for a hand blender since you can use it right in the pot (beware—a few blenders aren't intended for hot liquids).

**Gazpacho:** Puréeing raw vegetables can be a challenge, but good hand blenders can handle it.

**Drinks:** Smoothies, milkshakes, mixed drinks, frothed milk for cappuccino or hot chocolate—they're all easy with a hand blender.

**Applesauce:** For ultra-smooth applesauce, the hand blender beats the food mill. The top models can even pulverize apple skin.

**Pesto:** Blend half the herbs with all the other ingredients except the cheese, and then blend in the other half. Stir in the cheese by hand.

**Puréed Berries:** For a simple coulis, purée perfectly ripe raspberries with fresh lemon juice and sugar and then strain out the seeds.



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### Strong and splashproof

Braun Multiquick Professional  
(MR 5550 CA)

Average price: \$59  
[www.braun.com](http://www.braun.com)

This supersmooth model is powerful and comfortable. It's strong and steady, yet still slim and easy to handle. Among its assets are a continuous range of five speeds, easy-to-reach power buttons on the upper handle, and a scalloped "anti-splash" blade shield that really does prevent splashing, making it a soup-making star. This model tied for first place with the KitchenAid for making the fastest, smoothest puréed soup and gazpacho, and it makes incredibly smooth smoothies. For being so powerful, it has a pretty mellow operating sound, lower in tone and quieter than many. The shaft detaches from the motor and is dishwasher-safe. This model comes with a 20-ounce beaker, a handy bracket for wall mounting, a chopper, and a whisk.

**Caveats:** The blade guard is wider than most and doesn't fit in narrower containers. The speed dial on our model was a little stiff to turn.

### Speedy and versatile

KitchenAid Immersion Blender  
(KHB100E R)

Average price: \$50  
[www.kitchenaid.com](http://www.kitchenaid.com)

This model offers classic good looks combined with impressive performance. At 16 inches, it's the tallest of the hand blenders we tested, so it can reach deep into a stockpot to purée soup. It's slim and comfortable, with the on button on the upper side of the handle and an easy-to-turn speed dial on top. It won the smoothie contest hands down, both in speed and smoothness. Mayonnaise was a breeze, as were tougher tasks like gazpacho. It has a smaller blade shield that makes it ideal for small jobs as well as big ones. The stainless-steel shaft is detachable and dishwasher-safe but cleans up easily by hand, too. This model comes with a 24-ounce beaker (a whisk and a chopper are also available) and is sold in white, blue, red, or black.

**Caveats:** It's a bit louder than the Braun 5550 and can be prone to splashing.

## How to use a hand blender safely and wisely

### Prevent splashing.

Immerse the blender into the food as far as possible before turning it on, and keep it fully immersed while the blade is spinning. This is the key to avoiding major splatters.

### To minimize suction,

which can pull the blender to the bottom of the container, tilt the shaft slightly while blending and use low speed whenever practical. Always keep one hand on the container of food, unless you're blending in a heavy soup pot.

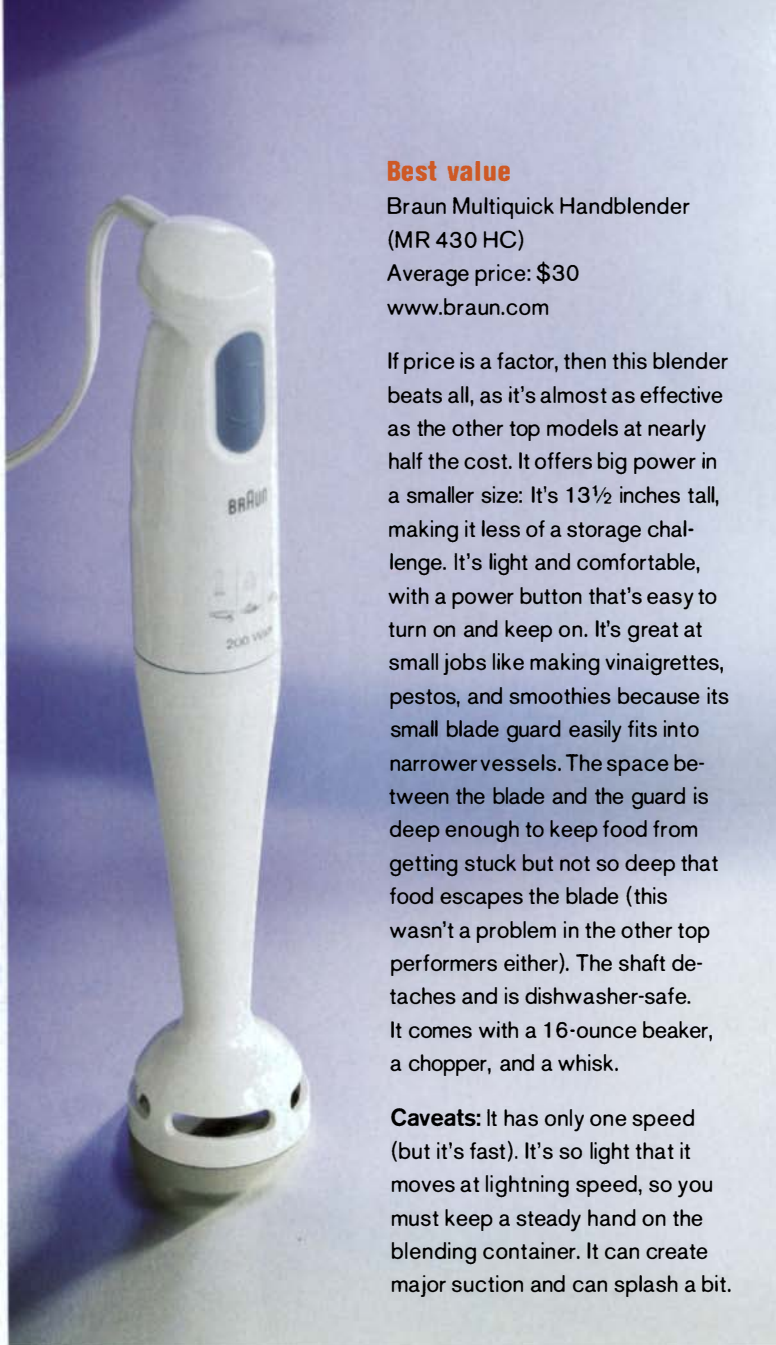
### If food gets stuck

between the blade and the guard, unplug the blender before attempting to clear it. A chopstick or a wooden skewer is handy for dislodging food safely.

### Stability is deceptive.

A hand blender is top-heavy by nature, so don't leave it standing up in its beaker or any container, even if it looks stable. If you need to pause mid-task, set the blender down on its side or detach the motor and leave the shaft standing.





### Best value

Braun Multiquick Handblender  
(MR 430 HC)

Average price: \$30

www.braun.com

If price is a factor, then this blender beats all, as it's almost as effective as the other top models at nearly half the cost. It offers big power in a smaller size: It's 13½ inches tall, making it less of a storage challenge. It's light and comfortable, with a power button that's easy to turn on and keep on. It's great at small jobs like making vinaigrettes, pestos, and smoothies because its small blade guard easily fits into narrower vessels. The space between the blade and the guard is deep enough to keep food from getting stuck but not so deep that food escapes the blade (this wasn't a problem in the other top performers either). The shaft detaches and is dishwasher-safe. It comes with a 16-ounce beaker, a chopper, and a whisk.

**Caveats:** It has only one speed (but it's fast). It's so light that it moves at lightning speed, so you must keep a steady hand on the blending container. It can create major suction and can splash a bit.

## How we tested

We tested sixteen hand blenders with an average retail price under \$60, evaluating their ability to purée potato-leek soup, blend smoothies, and emulsify mayonnaise. Almost every blender performed these tasks well, though some reached their goal more quickly than others. We also made gazpacho, vinaigrettes, applesauce, gravy, and baby food. To narrow the final contenders, we blended fresh parsley in water to evaluate splashing, blade sharpness, and overall strength. In addition to rating their performance, we evaluated power, comfort, control, weight, ease of cleaning, noise level, and extra features.

The other blenders we tested were: Cuisinart Cordless Rechargeable (CSB-44); Cuisinart Quick Prep (CSB-33); Cuisinart Smart Stick (CSB-55); Farberware Stick Blender (FSSB 100A); General Electric (106757); Girmi (MX 46US); Hamilton Beach Turbo-Twister Mixing Stick (59770); Oster (2612); Philips (HR1358); Sanyo (NHP-PK20); Sunbeam (HB100); T-Fal (8543000); Toastmaster (1740).

### Blend in almost any container.

Stockpots, glass measuring cups, bowls, and pitchers are good for large jobs. Most models come with plastic beakers for smaller quantities, but you can use any tall, reasonably wide glass. We like a tall French jelly glass (for sources, see p. 78). The main considerations in choosing a vessel should be weight and strength, as a hand blender can cause a ruckus in a flimsy container.

**Don't try** using a hand blender to make mashed potatoes, whipped cream, cookie or cake batters, herb butter, ground meat, or ground nuts. We found that it's not worth it, despite some manufacturers' claims.

*Joanne Bouknight is an architect and writer living in Cos Cob, Connecticut. Her most recent book is Taunton's New Kitchen Idea Book. ♦*

# Choosing Wines for Grilled Food

BY TIM GAISER

It's grilling time, and the seasonings you'll use on foods destined for the grill, combined with the smoky flavors grilling imparts, are some of the most intense preparations around. Such intensity calls for wines with big flavor, youthful fruit, and the robust influence of oak aging—qualities that happen to go well with smoky flavors. Whether you want a red or a white, here's how to step up and match the grill's intensity with the right kind of wine.

## white wines

with pronounced oak, which usually pose a challenge with food pairing because they dominate, are ideal mates for lots of grilled foods.

Here, an oaked wine's powerful flavors and smoky notes can be just the thing. Chardonnay, for example, is a natural with richer grilled fish and grilled chicken. Oak-aged Fumé Blanc (Sauvignon Blanc that has been oaked, and sometimes blended Semillon) and Viognier are good bets, too. Listed in ascending order of flavor intensity, here are good grill wines, along with suggestions for grilled dishes that especially suit them. (Retail prices are approximate.)

2001

**Chateau St. Jean Fumé Blanc**

Sonoma, California, \$12

Flaky, white fish with a citrus-caper butter

2001

**Cline Cellars Viognier**

Sonoma, California, \$16

Meaty fish with a tropical fruit salsa

2000

**deLorimier Spectrum Reserve Sauvignon Blanc**

Alexander Valley, California, \$16

Chicken with garlic and citrus

2002

**Ferrari-Carano Fumé Blanc**

Sonoma, California, \$14

Pork loin with grilled fruits (try pineapple or apples)

2001

**Mount Eden MacGregor Vineyard Chardonnay**

Edna Valley, California, \$16

Grilled vegetables and polenta

2002

**d'Arenberg Chardonnay "Olive Grove"**

South Australia, \$17

Veal chop with a red bell pepper sauce

What makes a wine taste big?

**Oak.** The oak barrels in which wine is aged add aromas and flavors of vanilla, baking spices, smoke, and sometimes just plain wood. The oak itself also adds tannins to the wine, along with an astringent, even bitter quality in extreme cases. Such wines overpower delicate dishes but can work well with grilled ones.

**Malolactic fermentation.** ML, as it is often called, is a process that most wines go through before bottling; you may have heard of it in reference to Chardonnay. Here, much of the tart malic acid (like that found in green apples) is transformed into softer, creamier lactic acid (like that found in dairy products). ML also creates a byproduct called diacetyl (die-A-suh-teel), which smells and tastes like butter. This imparts a rich flavor much sought by Chardonnay lovers.

**Grape variety.**

Intensity of flavor is what you need in wines that work best with grilling. Intense reds tend to come from thick-skinned grape varieties grown in warm, sunny climates, where the fruit ripens well.



2000  
**Dr. Taurino Salice**  
**Salentino** Apulia, Italy, **\$10**  
 pork loin with grilled  
 wild mushrooms

2002  
**Fairview "Goats do Roam"**  
**(Rhône-style blend)**  
 South Africa, **\$11**  
 Salmon drizzled  
 with fruity olive oil

2001  
**Guigal Côtes du Rhône**  
 France, **\$10**  
 Spice-rubbed pork loin

2002  
**Penfolds Thomas Hyland**  
**Shiraz** Australia, **\$12**  
 Burgers

2001  
**Chateau Souverain**  
**Merlot**  
 Alexander Valley,  
 California, **\$14**  
 Strip steak with  
 grilled onions

2002  
**Bonny Doon**  
**"Beastly Old Vines,"**  
**Cardinal Zinfandel**  
 California, **\$17**  
 Rib-eye with herb butter

**red wines** are a natural with many grilled foods. The combination of luscious cherry-berry fruit, bright acidity, and tannin is a perfect complement to the grill's robust flavors, especially grilled meats. Red wine is usually aged in small oak barrels, which add flavor, structure, and tannins of their own. My favorite grill wines include Zinfandel from California, Shiraz from Australia, and Rhône-style blends with Syrah. Richer Merlots also work well. Again, in ascending order of flavor power, here are good grill wines and suggestions for grilled dishes that suit them.

**Tannins.** Tannic acid comes from the skins of the grape and the barrels in which wine is often aged. Tannins are a valuable preservative in wine and create potential for a wine to age.

Grilled foods give you a chance to try robust wines that would overpower delicate dishes.

Tim Gaiser, a contributing editor to Fine Cooking, is a master sommelier. ♦

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READER SERVICE NO. 101

## WINNING TIP

### Give pie dough a spritz

I've always made pie dough the old-fashioned way, cutting the fat into the flour by hand rather than with a food processor. For a long time, however, I had trouble mixing in the ice water: Trickling it off a spoon invariably left me with a few wet clumps of dough sitting in a bowl of dry crumbs. I had to find a better way. So one day, I filled a clean spray bottle with ice water and spritzed the dry ingredients while tossing them with a fork. The ice water dispersed evenly, and my pie dough quickly came together into a workable mass that didn't crumble when I rolled it out. I now consider a spray bottle an essential pie-making tool.

—Erik Stokstad,  
Takoma Park, Maryland

### A prize for the best tip

Attention clever cooks: We want your best tips—we'll pay for the ones we publish—and we'll give a prize to the cleverest tip in each issue. Write to Tips, *Fine Cooking*, PO Box 5506, Newtown, CT

06470-5506 or

send e-mail to  
fc@taunton.

com. The prize:  
a Shun carving  
set from  
Kershaw;  
value, \$199.

### Squeeze the seeds out of a tomato

When a recipe calls for seeding a tomato, I simply cut off a ½ inch from the bottom and squeeze the tomato to release the seeds and pulp. It's much faster than halving each tomato and scooping out the seeds.

—Penny Cohen,  
Rancho Mirage, California

### Poach leftover egg yolks

I recently prepared a recipe that called for egg whites, and I had several intact egg yolks left over. Instead of putting them in the fridge and forgetting about them, I poached them in simmering water just as I would whole eggs, until they were firmly cooked, and then I crumbled them into a potato salad.

—Jeanne Schimmel,  
via e-mail



### Slice basil with kitchen shears

For the thinnest chiffonade of basil, I roll up a stack of leaves and use a sharp pair of kitchen shears instead of a knife.

—Carol A. Vollmer,  
Durham, North Carolina

### Nut shells create flavorful smoke

We save our nut shells and toss them onto hot charcoal briquettes in our grill. The smoldering shells give a unique smoky flavor to anything grilled or barbecued.

—Sharon R. Howard,  
Eugene, Oregon



## Stretch pizza dough over a mixing bowl

Instead of rolling out pizza dough, I stretch it over an upside-down mixing bowl. Here's how I do it: After letting the dough rest as usual, I remove it from the bowl, flip the bowl over, and dust its bottom with flour. Then I pull the dough down the sides of the bowl, give the bowl a quarter turn, pull down the dough, and so on, until I've stretched the dough to the size I want. (The dough seems to resist shrinking back up, perhaps because it clings to the textured surface of my ceramic mixing bowl.) When it's time to make pizza, I turn the bowl over and let the dough fall onto a prepared peel. Then I just add toppings and slide it all onto a hot pizza stone or grill.

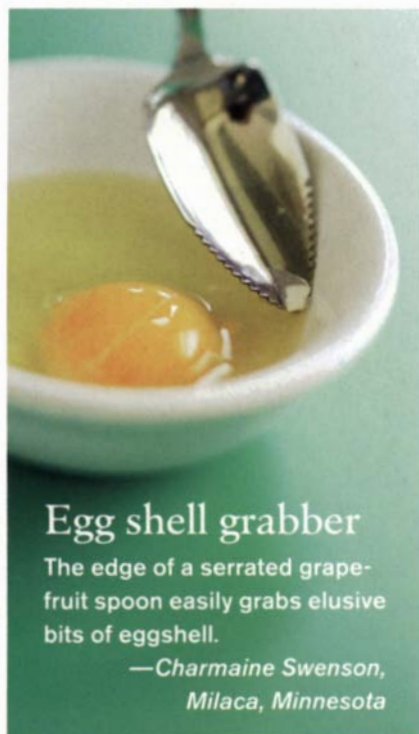
—Rhonda Gadd, Corvallis, Oregon



## A spoonful of flour keeps raisins from sinking

I just want to add a thought to Greg Case's article "Carrot Cake, Perfected," in *Fine Cooking* #63. Mr. Case says he uses currants instead of raisins because they don't sink in the batter. I've found that dusting raisins with flour keeps them from sinking. Before adding raisins to a batter, I simply toss the raisins in a couple of tablespoons of flour until they're coated. This technique also works for chocolate chips in cake or quick bread batters.

—Laura Rose,  
Waterbury, Connecticut



### Egg shell grabber

The edge of a serrated grapefruit spoon easily grabs elusive bits of eggshell.

—Charmaine Swenson,  
Milaca, Minnesota

## Little metal "skewers" won't burn on the grill

I love to make hors d'oeuvres like bacon-wrapped shrimp or chicken satay on the grill. Wooden skewers always seemed to char, no matter how long I soaked them in water. So, recently I bought a few dozen metal turkey lancers. They're the perfect size for skewering appetizers, and they don't burn.

—Michaela Rosenthal,  
Woodland Hills, California

## EMULSIFYING

### Shake up a vinaigrette in a "sippee" cup

Now that our kids have outgrown spillproof "sippee" cups, I've discovered that they're perfect for making small batches of vinaigrette or other emulsions. Just dump in the ingredients, screw on the top, and shake.

—Sheldon Pressman, via email

### Blend a slurry in a cocktail shaker

When I need a quick thickener for sauce or gravy, I make a slurry by putting flour and water in a regular cocktail shaker and giving it a few good shakes. This produces a much smoother mixture than I've ever been able to make by stirring. And the shaker has a built-in strainer which keeps any lingering lumps of starch from getting into the sauce.

—Jessica Buker-Vincent,  
Windham, Maine

# Grilled Pizza Is Great for a Party

Prepare the  
dough and  
toppings ahead,  
light up the grill,  
and let guests  
grill their  
own pizzas

BY FRANK MCCLELLAND

One of the things I like best about being a chef is sharing my passion for cooking with friends. So when I entertain, I like to get everyone involved. Throwing a “make your own pizza” party is a perfect way to do this. And in summer, a grilled pizza party is even better. Everyone loves pizza, but most people have never taken a turn at grilling it. Once they do, they flip over it.

**Lots of make-ahead components mean more time to spend with your guests.** The great thing about a party like this is that you can prepare the dough and toppings far in advance. The dough is flexible; it's quick to work together and only needs about an hour to rise, so you can make it on short notice. But even better, you can make it a day ahead and let it rise overnight in the refrigerator. The dough also freezes well. A few hours before guests arrive, I bring the dough to room temperature, roll it into disks, stack them on a baking sheet, and store them in the refrigera-

tor so they're ready to grill when the party starts.

**The pizza toppings can be as simple or as luxurious as you like.**

I like to make a few interesting toppings ahead, so that my guests can have fun experimenting with different ingredient combinations. My favorites are roasted Vidalia onions, roasted red pepper purée, roasted garlic, and black olive tapenade (see the recipes on p. 39). You can make them all up to three days before your party. If you're pressed for time, you could skip making the toppings and head for a good Italian deli for some fresh mozzarella, thinly sliced cured meats, and even high-quality canned tomatoes. Either way, add a nice selection of fresh herbs, grated cheeses, and extra-virgin olive oil, and you're all set.

To accompany the pizzas, serve your favorite green salad. A fruit dessert (like one of those on pp. 62–67) is a nice ending, but to make things easy on yourself, why not serve a selection of ice cream?

Let guests



Olive tapenade, roasted Vidalia onions, and crumbled blue cheese



improvise pizzas with make-ahead toppings



Roasted red pepper purée,  
roasted garlic, fresh mozzarella,  
and basil



Three cheeses, fresh tomato, and rosemary



Roasted garlic, Fontina, and oregano



Artichokes, Parmesan,  
and prosciutto



# Grilled pizza made easy

A successful—and relaxed—pizza grilling party depends on being organized. Since your guests will actually be making their own pizzas, you want to make everything as easy for them as possible. Fortunately, you can prepare all your ingredients in advance (just follow the do-ahead plan below). Then, on the day of the party, gather your tools and ingredients (following the checklist below), and you'll be ready to grill.

## Do-ahead plan

### Up to three days ahead

Make the Roasted Red Pepper Purée (p. 39).

Make the Roasted Vidalia Onions (p. 39).

Make the Olive Tapenade (p. 39).

Make the Roasted Garlic (p. 39).

### Up to two days ahead

Buy cheeses, extra-virgin olive oil, and any additional deli pizza toppings.

### That morning

Make the pizza dough (or make it several days in advance and freeze it).

### Up to four hours ahead

Roll out the pizza doughs, layer them between sheets of parchment, cover, and refrigerate.

Prepare a green salad.

Grate or slice the cheeses and cut any vegetables for the pizzas.

### Half an hour before grilling

Assemble the items on the checklist at right.

Start the fire on the gas or charcoal grill.

## Checklist

### Pizza ingredients

Several make-ahead toppings (p. 39) or easy, no-cook toppings (p. 38)

Cheese (p. 38)

Pizza dough rounds (p. 38)

Extra-virgin olive oil for brushing

Kosher or sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Chopped fresh herbs for sprinkling on at the end of cooking (optional)

### Pizza grilling equipment

Trays or baking sheets for organizing tools and ingredients

Small bowls for salt, black pepper, and fresh herbs

Tongs

Spatula

Large cutting board

Chef's knife or pizza cutter

Pastry brush for oiling the pizzas

### Accompaniments

Water, soda, beer, or wine (for wine suggestions, see p. 8)

Green salad

Ice cream or a simple fruit dessert



## How to grill a pizza

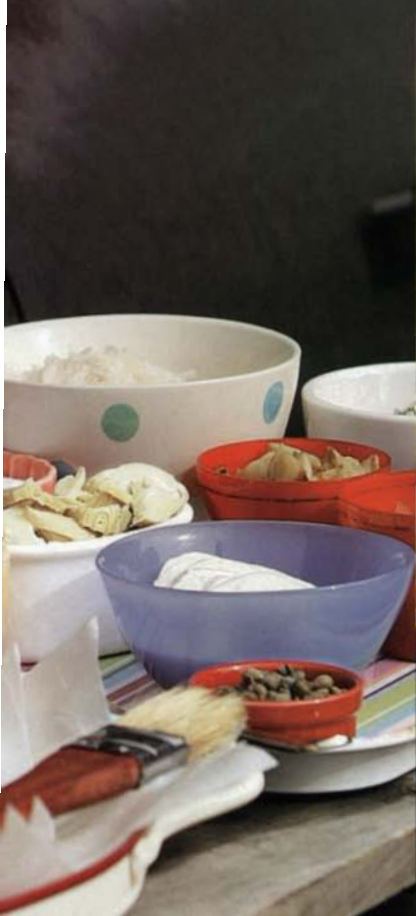
**Get set up:** Arrange the toppings, pizza doughs, a cutting board, and other tools (see the checklist at left) next to the grill within easy reach.

**Gas grill:** Prepare a two-level fire with the back and middle burners on high and the front burner on low. If your gas grill only has two burners, set one on high and the other on low.

**Charcoal grill:** Prepare a fire with hotter and cooler areas by spreading the majority of the hot coals on one side of the grill and fewer on the other half.

**Oil the dough:** Brush the top of one dough round with olive oil and sprinkle with a pinch of salt.





**Transfer the dough:** Use both hands to pick up a round of dough. Moving quickly and holding the top edge of the dough, lay the bottom edge (oiled side down) on the hot part of the grill. As soon as the first edge of the dough makes contact with the grill grate, pull gently on the dough as you finish laying it down to stretch it thinly.

**Brown one side:** Brush the top of the dough with olive oil and sprinkle with salt. Grill without moving until the pizza browns and develops good grill marks on the bottom, 1 to 3 minutes; check frequently to prevent burning.



**Flip:** Flip the dough with a spatula and tongs and arrange your choice of toppings on the browned side of the pizza. (Work quickly, or move the pizza to the cooler area of the grill while topping.) When the bottom has browned and developed strong grill marks, 1 to 3 minutes, move the pizza to the cooler part of the grill.

**Cover:** Close the lid and grill until the pizza toppings are hot to the touch and any cheese has melted, 3 to 8 minutes.



**Check:** Check the bottom of the pizza frequently, turning the pizza from back to front and side to side to prevent burning in case your grill has any hot spots. Transfer the pizza to a cutting board and slice. Serve immediately.

To really enjoy the crisp texture and great toasty flavor of a grilled pizza, don't overload it. Scatter cheeses lightly. Spoon on a little sauce and spread it unevenly with the back of a spoon. Toss on a few cloves of garlic and a sprinkling of herbs.

# Shop ahead, make ahead for a relaxed grilled

## Make the dough a day or a week ahead

(it will rise slowly in the cold, and then it will need 20 to 30 minutes at room temperature before you shape it). For longer storage, freeze the dough for up to a month. Thaw frozen dough overnight in the refrigerator or on the counter at room temperature for 2 to 2½ hours.

You can make the dough, let it rise, and shape it all in about an hour. Or you can make the dough ahead. You can refrigerate the dough overnight



## Buy cheeses and toppings two days ahead

### Cheeses

Parmigiano Reggiano, freshly grated or shaved

Feta, crumbled

Mozzarella, sliced or diced

Fontina, grated

Goat cheese, crumbled

Blue cheese, crumbled

### No-cook toppings

Pepperoni, thinly sliced prosciutto, or sliced cured sausage

Olives, capers, slivered sun-dried tomatoes, hot cherry peppers, or anchovies

Thinly sliced ripe beefsteak or plum tomatoes, quartered cherry tomatoes, or good-quality canned diced tomatoes, drained

Baby spinach or arugula leaves

Prepared pesto

## Pizza Dough

*Yields enough for eight small pizzas.*

Figure one to two balls of dough per person. Make two separate batches if you need more dough.

**1 package (2¼ teaspoons) active dry yeast or 1 ounce fresh yeast**  
**1¼ cups warm water (about 105°F)**  
**1¼ pounds (about 4¼ cups) all-purpose flour**  
**2 teaspoons kosher salt**  
**¼ cup olive oil; more for the bowl**

Stir the yeast into the water; let sit for 15 minutes. Combine the flour and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook or in a large bowl. On low speed in the stand mixer or stirring with a wooden spoon, slowly add the yeast mixture and the olive oil alternately to the flour. Knead for 6 minutes on low speed in the stand mixer or on a floured surface by hand until it becomes elastic. The dough should feel soft and just a little sticky. If it feels grainy or dry, add 1 tablespoon warm water at a time (up to ¼ cup). Knead for another 2 minutes by hand on a floured surface.

**To use the dough the same day:** Transfer the dough to a lightly oiled bowl that's at least twice the size of the dough and cover with a damp dishtowel. Let rise at room temperature until almost doubled, about 1 hour. The dough is ready

when you poke a finger in it and it holds the impression.

**To hold the dough for one day:** Put the dough in a lightly oiled bowl that's at least twice the size of the dough and cover with plastic; refrigerate overnight. It will rise slowly in the cold, doubling in size.

**To freeze the dough:** Put the unrisen dough directly into a large zip-top bag. Freeze for up to one month. Transfer it to the refrigerator one day before proceeding.

Let refrigerated dough warm up for 20 minutes at room temperature before proceeding.

**Punch down the dough** and divide it into eight 4-ounce balls. Put each ball on a floured surface and, with your hands, flatten and stretch it into a disk that's about ½ inch thick. The dough will be fairly elastic and will tend to spring back. Cover each piece with plastic and let rest for 5 minutes. Stretch or roll each disk into an 8- to 10-inch round about ⅛ inch thick (the thinner, the better). If they continue to seem springy and resist rolling, cover and let rest for a few more minutes. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment or waxed paper and layer the rounds on it with a sheet of parchment or waxed paper between each. Use the dough immediately or cover and refrigerate for up to 4 hours.



# pizza party

## Cook the toppings up to three days ahead

Really great grilled pizza deserves some interesting toppings, so choose at least one of these recipes to offer along with any purchased ingredients. You can make any of these easy and delicious recipes on your own schedule and refrigerate them for up to three days. Each topping recipe yields more than enough for eight pizzas, so you'll most likely have leftovers, but don't worry: You'll like having these on hand for summer salads, pastas, and sandwiches.



### Olive Tapenade

*Yields 1 1/4 cups.*

I prefer oil-cured olives for this tapenade. They have an intense flavor, and they blend into a nice, smooth paste.

- 1 cup pitted Kalamata or Gaeta olives (preferably oil-cured)**
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1/4 cup diced red onion**
- 4 anchovy fillets, rinsed and roughly chopped**
- 3 tablespoons drained capers**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 teaspoon Cognac**
- 1 teaspoon cracked black pepper**

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor and process until finely chopped and well combined.

### Roasted Vidalia Onions

*Yields 3 1/2 cups.*

- 1 tablespoon olive oil**
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter**
- 3 pounds Vidalia onions (about 5 or 6), sliced in half from stem to root**
- 1 teaspoon sherry vinegar**
- 1 teaspoon kosher or sea salt**
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme**
- 1/2 teaspoon granulated sugar**

Heat the oven to 400°F. Set a large ovenproof skillet (or a flameproof roasting dish) over medium-high heat for 30 seconds. Put in the olive oil and butter. When the butter foams or browns slightly, add the onions, cut side up. Cook until the onions brown slightly, about 3 minutes. Flip them so the cut sides face down and put the pan in the oven. Roast until the onions are very tender and dark golden brown, 50 to 60 minutes. Remove from the oven and sprinkle with the sherry vinegar, salt, thyme, and sugar. Let cool to room temperature and then slice into thin strips; pour any juices from the pan over them and mix them in.

### Roasted Red Pepper Purée

*Yields 3 1/4 cups.*

- 6 red bell peppers**
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 teaspoon sweet paprika**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**

Position an oven rack 6 inches from the element and heat the broiler to high, or prepare a medium-hot fire on your gas or charcoal grill. Broil or grill the peppers, flipping every 1 to 2 minutes, until all sides are blistered, about 8 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and seal with plastic. Let cool for about 20 minutes and then peel off the skins, remove the stem, scoop out the seeds, and discard the peppers' juices. Don't rinse the peppers at any point, as this will wash off much of their sweet flavor. Put the flesh in a food processor or a blender. Add the olive oil, lemon juice, garlic, and paprika. Purée on high until the mixture is smooth and shiny. Season with salt and pepper to taste. If you prefer a smoother purée, force the mixture through a fine sieve.

### Roasted Garlic

*Yields about 2 cups.*

- 6 heads garlic, unpeeled**
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**

Heat the oven to 350°F. Cut off the tips of the garlic heads so you can see the cloves. Brush the cut sides of the heads with olive oil and set them, cut side down, on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast until the garlic is soft when squeezed, about 30 minutes. Let cool slightly. While the heads are still warm, squeeze each one over a small bowl; the roasted cloves should slide out easily.

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*Frank McClelland is the chef-owner of L'Espalier in Boston.* ♦

# Pestos Basil & Beyond

BY TONY ROSENFELD

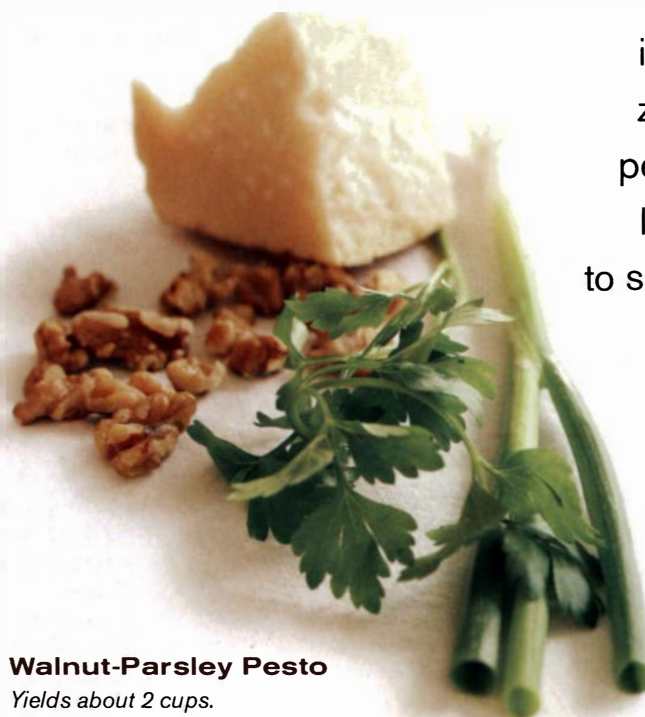
**W**hen someone says “pesto,” most likely you think of basil (and pine nuts and Parmesan).

But in Italy, a pesto can include everything from herbs to anchovies, depending on the region and the season, and it might not even have basil in it. The one unifying feature of Italian pestos is their dense, paste-like texture, which is usually as intensely flavored as it is thick.

I often adapt this concept using what I have on hand in my own pantry and what I see in my local market. I blend vibrant ingredients—herbs, nuts, and cured items like olives or sun-dried tomatoes—into tasty (and sometimes nontraditional) pestos, and then use these mixtures to dress up simple summer meals.

While I love the feel of a mortar and pestle, I favor using a food processor for these recipes. The food processor is quick and chops the ingredients uniformly, and it also lets me make ample batches. Pestos will keep in the refrigerator for at least a couple of days, enough time to jazz up several meals’ worth of grilled or roasted fare—or pasta, of course. Here, I’ve included a recipe to pair with each pesto, but feel free to put together your own combinations. The great part about having these pestos on hand is spontaneously creating your own dishes.

Blend vibrant ingredients for zesty, versatile pestos that add layers of flavor to summer dishes



## Walnut-Parsley Pesto

*Yields about 2 cups.*

- 2 cups loosely packed, coarsely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley (from 1 or 2 bunches)**
- 1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts, toasted and cooled**
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup freshly grated Parmigiano Reggiano**
- 1 cup thinly sliced scallions (white and green parts from about 6 medium scallions)**
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice; more to taste**

Put the parsley, walnuts, cheese, scallions, and 1 teaspoon salt in a food processor. Turn on the machine and slowly pour the olive oil in through the feed tube. Process until the mixture comes together into a thick paste. With the machine running, add the lemon juice and 3 to 4 tablespoons water to thin the mixture to a thick, paste-like consistency. Adjust the seasoning with salt, pepper, and more lemon juice to taste.





## Using Walnut-Parsley Pesto:

Spread on a crostini and top with a grilled shrimp.

Pulse 1 cup of the pesto with 1 cup unsalted butter to make an herb-walnut butter, which is great melted onto grilled meats or folded into mashed potatoes.

Spread on sandwiches. I like it on toasted wheat bread with turkey and tomato.

### **Fettuccine with Green Beans & Walnut-Parsley Pesto**

*Serves six.*

**10 ounces fresh green beans,  
rinsed, trimmed, and snapped  
in half**  
**1 pound dried fettuccine**  
**1 cup Walnut-Parsley Pesto (see  
the recipe at left)**  
**10 oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes,  
thinly sliced**  
**2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice;  
more to taste**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground  
black pepper**  
**6 tablespoons freshly grated  
Parmigiano Reggiano**

Bring a large pot with 4 quarts water and 1 tablespoon salt to a boil. Add the green beans and

cook until they're just tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the beans to a large bowl, cover with cold water, and then drain. Return the cooking water to a boil and cook the fettuccine to al dente, about 10 minutes. Drain and transfer to a large serving bowl. Add the green beans, pesto, sun-dried tomatoes, lemon juice, 1 teaspoon salt, and several grinds of pepper; toss well. Taste and add more salt, pepper, and lemon juice, if you like. Serve immediately with a sprinkling of the cheese.



### Basil Pesto

*Yields about  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup.*

**4 cups lightly packed fresh basil leaves (from about 1 large bunch)**  
 **$\frac{1}{3}$  cup toasted pine nuts**  
 **$\frac{1}{4}$  cup lightly packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves**  
**1 small clove garlic**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
 **$\frac{1}{4}$  cup extra-virgin olive oil**

Put the basil, pine nuts, parsley, garlic,  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon salt, and  $\frac{1}{8}$  teaspoon pepper in a food processor. With the machine on, slowly pour the olive oil into the feed tube and process, stopping to scrape the sides of the bowl as needed, until the mixture is very finely chopped and pasty. Season to taste with salt, if you like.



### Roasted Cod with Basil Pesto & Garlic Breadcrumbs

*Serves four.*

**1 large ripe tomato, cored and sliced very thinly (about  $\frac{1}{8}$  inch)**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**  
 **$1\frac{1}{2}$  cups coarse fresh white breadcrumbs (from about 4 slices of bread, trimmed of crusts)**  
**1 small clove garlic, minced**  
 **$1\frac{1}{2}$  pounds cod or haddock, rinsed, patted dry, and cut into 4 even portions**  
 **$\frac{2}{3}$  cup Basil Pesto (see the recipe above)**

Heat the oven to 450°F. Spread the tomato slices on a large plate and season with  $\frac{1}{4}$  tea-

spoon salt and a few grinds of black pepper. Heat a large sauté pan over medium heat for 1 minute. Pour in the olive oil, add the breadcrumbs, and season with  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt. Cook, stirring, until the breadcrumbs start to turn a light golden brown, about 4 minutes. Add the garlic and continue to cook, stirring, for another 1 minute. Transfer to a bowl.

Set the fish on a large rimmed baking sheet lined with foil. Season with salt and pepper. Divide the pesto evenly over the fish and top each with two or three tomato slices and the breadcrumbs. Roast until the fish is opaque on the sides and starts to flake, about 10 minutes. Serve immediately.

### Using Basil Pesto:

**Toss with grilled zucchini and summer squash and top with shavings of Parmigiano Reggiano.**

**Serve with grilled lamb.**

**Spread on sliced ripe fresh tomatoes, top with breadcrumbs, and slide under the broiler to heat.**

**Mix a couple of tablespoons with best-quality extra-virgin olive oil and use as a dip for bread.**

**Spread between vegetable layers in a gratin.**

**Use as a filling with tomato and ricotta for a vegetable lasagna.**



### **Black Olive & Mint Pesto**

*Yields 1 cup.*

**1¼ cups pitted Kalamata olives**  
**3 tablespoons olive oil**  
**2 tablespoons lightly packed**  
**chopped fresh mint**  
**1 shallot, minced**  
**2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice;**  
**more to taste**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground**  
**black pepper**

Put the olives, olive oil, mint, shallot, and lemon juice in a food processor. Process, stopping to scrape the sides of the bowl with a rubber spatula after a couple of seconds, until the mixture is smooth. Season the pesto to taste with lemon juice, salt, and pepper.



### **Using** **Black Olive** **& Mint** **Pesto:**

**Spread on toast points and top with slices of smoked salmon.**

**Toss with penne, grilled chicken, and grilled pepper strips.**

**Serve as a dip with pita chips and chopped fresh parsley.**

### **tool tip**

**Check the blades on your food processor.** As a food processor ages, so do its blades, which begin to dull with use. Blunt blades bruise herbs and other pesto ingredients, causing them to oxidize and darken quickly. To order replacement blades, see *Where to Buy It*, p. 78.

### **Warm Roasted Potato Salad with Black Olive & Mint Pesto**

*Serves four.*

**2 pounds red potatoes, cut into 1-inch pieces**  
**2 teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary**  
**3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**½ cup Black Olive & Mint Pesto (see the recipe above left)**  
**3 scallions (white and green parts, trimmed and thinly sliced)**  
**1 tablespoon lightly packed chopped fresh mint; plus mint sprigs for garnish (optional)**

Heat the oven to 450°F. In a large bowl, toss the potatoes with the rosemary, 2 tablespoons of the olive oil, 1 teaspoon salt, and a few generous grinds of pepper. Rub the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil on a heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet. Spread the potatoes on the baking sheet and roast, tossing after 15 minutes, until they're nicely browned and tender when pierced with a paring knife, about 30 minutes.

While the potatoes are still hot, toss with ½ cup of the pesto, the scallions, and the mint in a large bowl. Transfer to a serving platter, garnish with mint sprigs if you like, and serve warm.



## Broiled Pork Chops with Sun-Dried Tomato & Chipotle Pesto

*Serves four.*

**4 bone-in, center-cut pork chops  
each 1 inch thick (about  
2½ pounds total)**  
**¾ teaspoon kosher salt**  
**Freshly ground black pepper**  
**¾ cup Sun-Dried Tomato & Chipotle  
Pesto (see the recipe at left)**

Position an oven rack 6 inches from the broiler element and heat the broiler to high. Set the pork chops on a heavy-duty rimmed baking sheet or broiler pan. Season both sides of the pork chops with the salt and a few grinds black pepper and then cover both sides of the pork with the pesto—it should completely cover the pork. Let it sit for 10 minutes.

Broil until the pesto darkens and any exposed parts of the pork chops become brown, about 4 minutes. Flip and continue cooking until the pork becomes firm to the touch and registers 145°F on an instant-read thermometer, another 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer the chops to serving plates. If any pesto remains on the pan, scrape it up and top the chops with it. Serve immediately.

## Sun-Dried Tomato & Chipotle Pesto

*Yields about ¾ cup.*

**1 cup loosely packed roughly  
chopped fresh cilantro**  
**½ cup oil-packed sun-dried  
tomatoes; plus 2 tablespoons  
of the oil from the jar**  
**2 medium or 1 large canned chipotle  
chiles in adobo; plus 2 teaspoons  
of the adobo sauce**  
**1 teaspoon light brown sugar**  
**1 small clove garlic, minced**  
**½ teaspoon ground cumin**  
**½ teaspoon kosher salt**  
**⅓ teaspoon freshly ground  
black pepper**

Put all the ingredients in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped and pasty.

## Using Sun-Dried Tomato & Chipotle Pesto:

**Spread a little on tortillas  
and top with cheese to  
make tasty quesadillas.**

**Add a few tablespoons  
to a black bean salad for  
a little kick.**

**Mix into cooked ground  
beef for a tasty taco  
filling.**



*Tony Rosenfeld is a contributing editor  
to Fine Cooking.* ♦



# A Summer Challenge

We asked two chefs to raid the farmstand; here's how each used tomatoes, basil, and corn to make a great summer dish

COMPILED BY AMY ALBERT

**T**his is the time of year cooks live for. Stop by any farmstand, street vendor, or farmers' market and you're treated to a colorful riot of gorgeous vegetables that beg for simple treatment in the kitchen. But despite the fact that simple can be dazzling, sometimes you want new ideas.

In that spirit, we asked two chefs, Jean-Pierre Moullé and Pascal Sauton, to raid the figurative farmstand and create a dish with a limited number of ingredients. Both chefs are French-born but have spent much of their careers working on the West Coast and focusing on local American produce.

Jean-Pierre and Pascal came up with different dishes, but their approaches had similarities. Each was adamant about treating the ingredients simply, and each came up with a cool dish that would be perfect as a light summer lunch or dinner starter. And coincidentally, each used shellfish to play off the flavors of the market basket ingredients.

**Rules of the game:** In addition to the three market basket ingredients—fresh tomatoes, basil, and corn—Jean-Pierre and Pascal were allowed to use unlimited ingredients from a basic pantry: butter, vegetable oil, olive oil, cream, milk, eggs, onions, shallots, garlic, broth or stock (beef, chicken, or vegetable), vinegar, lemon juice, water, wine, flour, sugar, salt, and pepper. The chefs could also use up to four wildcards: any other ingredient of their choice.







## Jean-Pierre Moullé makes a composed salad

**W**hen I first started to consider the market basket, my initial thought was, "With ingredients like these, who needs more than a piece of bread, a little olive oil, and salt?" The acidity of the tomato, the sweetness of the corn, and the fragrant spiciness of the basil work so well together. But that would have been too easy.

I then thought of shellfish salads, some of my very favorite warm-weather dishes. As one of my wildcards, I chose lobster for its rich flavor, which plays well against the acidity and sweetness of the tomatoes. In addition, the shellfish's firm texture goes beautifully with the corn's crunch. If you'd prefer, use shrimp instead; it will also taste great.

This salad makes a perfect lunch with some toasted bread and a glass of Sauvignon Blanc or Alsace Riesling. Or, to serve the salad as a first course, follow it with something simple but earthy, like braised chicken or grilled fish with olive oil and lemon. For dessert, try a bowl of strawberries with a splash of dessert wine, or a simple fruit tart.

### Tomato, Corn & Basil Salad with Lobster

*Serves four as a main dish.*

If you don't feel like cooking lobster, buying cooked lobster meat or shrimp at a good seafood store is a good alternative. For more on handling lobster, see From Our Test Kitchen, p. 70.

- 4 ears fresh corn, shucked, silk removed**
- Sea salt (I prefer fleur de sel)**
- 2 live lobsters, about 1 ¼ pounds each (or 9 ounces cooked lobster meat)**
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice**
- 2 tablespoons white-wine vinegar or Champagne vinegar**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- ½ cup extra-virgin olive oil**
- 1 pound ripe tomatoes (I like Early Girl), cored, seeded, and cut into ¼-inch dice**
- 2 fresh jalapeños, seeded and minced (to yield about 3 tablespoons)**
- 2 shallots, minced (to yield ¼ cup)**
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil leaves**
- 5 ounces (about 4 cups) mixed baby greens**

Bring a large pot of unsalted water to a boil over high heat. Add the corn and cook for 3 minutes. With tongs, remove the ears of corn from the pot and set them aside to cool. Salt the water generously (it should taste like the sea) and return the pot to a boil. Add the lobsters and cook uncovered for about 8 minutes. Check for doneness by twisting the tail off one lobster. The meat should be opaque throughout. If it's still translucent, continue cooking for another minute or two. Drain and let cool. Crack the shells; remove the meat from the tails and claws (for technique tips, see From Our Test Kitchen, p. 70). Slice into ½-inch pieces and refrigerate in a bowl until ready to use.

In a medium bowl, combine the lemon juice and vinegar with ½ teaspoon salt and a few grinds pepper. Whisk in the olive oil in a thin stream. Slice the corn kernels off the cobs (for tips, see From Our Test Kitchen, p. 69). Add the kernels to the vinaigrette, along with the tomatoes, jalapeños, shallots, and basil. Toss gently, taste, and adjust the seasonings if needed. Put the greens in another bowl.

Tilt the bowl with the tomatoes and spoon off about 4 tablespoons of the juices. Add this to the bowl of greens and toss to coat. Spoon off about 3 more tablespoons of juice from the tomatoes and add this to the lobster; toss to coat. Taste both the greens and the lobster; adjust the seasonings as needed.

Divide the tomato salad, lobster, and greens evenly among four plates, arranging them in separate mounds, and serve.

*Jean-Pierre Moullé is the former executive chef of Chez Panisse in Berkeley, California. He still works closely with the restaurant.*



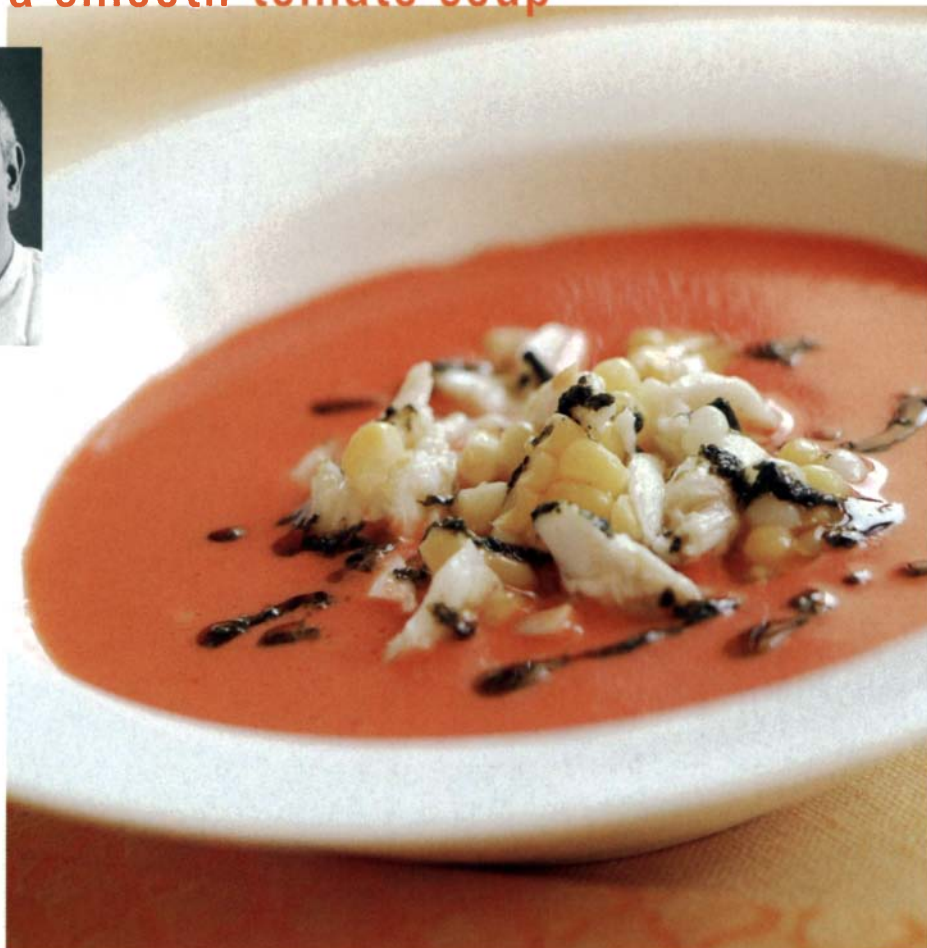
# Pascal Sauton makes a smooth tomato soup

I wanted to treat these three ingredients very simply in order to respect their true flavors, which means that the success of this recipe relies on the quality and freshness of the ingredients. Be sure to choose tomatoes that are truly ripe, and buy freshly picked sweet corn.



For a wildcard, I chose crabmeat, which I use very often with corn; the combination brings richness as well as chewy contrast to the smooth soup. It also turns this dish into a meal. Here in the Pacific Northwest, we like Dungeness crab, but you can use any lump crabmeat. The pistou, a classic basil purée, adds herba-ceous and earthy notes, bringing depth and roundness to the entire dish.

This soup would be wonderful as a light summer lunch, served with some grilled country bread drizzled with olive oil, and a glass of Sauvignon Blanc. If I served this as a starter, I'd follow it with grilled tuna with lemon, olive oil, rosemary, and olives. For dessert, all you need are fresh berries tossed with grated orange zest and sugar, and a dollop of crème fraîche.



## Chilled Tomato Soup with Crab Salad & Pistou

*Serves four as a first course or light lunch.*

I like to use fleur de sel (French sea salt) in uncooked recipes for its sweetness, as opposed to the more metallic taste of iodized or kosher salt. If you can't find it, use a good-quality sea salt. Make the soup close to serving time; chilling it for too long mutes the bright tomato flavors.

- 1 medium clove garlic**
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves**
- Sea salt (I prefer fleur de sel)**
- ½ cup plus 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil**
- 2 ears fresh corn**
- 2 pounds ripe red or purple heirloom tomatoes (I like Stupice or Purple Cherokee)**
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice; more to taste**
- Freshly ground black pepper**
- ½ pound lump crabmeat, such as Dungeness, Maine, or blue (for more on crabmeat, see p. 68)**

**Make the pistou:** Put the garlic, basil, and a pinch of sea salt in a mortar and pound until puréed smoothly. (Alternatively, use a chef's knife to chop the basil very finely and to mash the garlic salt to a paste with the salt; then combine them in a small bowl.) Add 2 tablespoons of the olive oil, mix, and let infuse at room temperature for 1 hour.

**Grill the corn:** Heat a gas grill to high or prepare a hot charcoal fire. Cut off the tip of the corn's husks (to make it easier to remove the husks once grilled). Grill the corn in the husk for 15 to 20 minutes, giving it a quarter turn every 5 minutes, keeping the grill covered (the kernels should be cooked but not charred). When it's cool enough to handle, remove all of the husk and silk. With a sharp knife, cut the kernels off the cob (for tips, see *From Our Test Kitchen*, p. 69). Set the kernels aside.

**Make the soup:** Core the tomatoes and cut them into chunks. Working in

two batches, put half the tomatoes in a blender with 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice and ¼ cup of the olive oil in each batch. Season with a generous pinch of sea salt and black pepper, and blend on high speed until smooth. Strain through a fine sieve, pressing on the solids to force the liquid through the mesh. Taste and adjust the seasonings if needed. Refrigerate until serving time.

Pick through the crabmeat for any bits of shell. Put it in a bowl along with 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1 teaspoon sea salt, and black pepper to taste. Add the grilled corn kernels; mix thoroughly. Adjust the seasonings if needed.

Divide the soup among four chilled soup bowls. Spoon a mound of crab salad in the center of each serving. Stir the pistou and then drizzle it over the soup and crab. Serve at once.

*Pascal Sauton is the chef-owner of Carafe restaurant in Portland, Oregon. ♦*

# Chicken Salad

BY LORI LONGBOTHAM

**W**henever I'm in Milan, I can't get enough of the classic regional dish, la cotoletta Milanese. It's a warm breaded veal cutlet, topped with pungent arugula and tomato salad. The contrasts are dazzling: The fresh, lively salad is a perfect foil for the warm, crisp meat. Cool stands out against hot. Red against green. Stylish as the city of its origin, this dish is a perfect example of elegant simplicity. It's also one of those rare restaurant dishes that you can easily make at home.

The Milanese eat veal the way we eat chicken; in fact, in Milan the word *cotoletta* implies veal. And as much as I like veal in this dish, I like chicken even more, so I use boneless chicken breast when I make this recipe at home.

Italian cooks dredge the cutlets in homemade dry breadcrumbs before frying them, and you can, too. (For instructions on how to make your own, see the photos at right.) You can also buy excellent breadcrumbs at bakeries or specialty food stores. If you opt for crumbs from the supermarket, be sure to choose the unseasoned variety.

**Sauté the chicken in butter and olive oil.** Butter is the principal

cooking fat in the Lombardy region, where Milan is located, and while clarified butter (which can withstand high heat because the milk solids have been removed) is ideal for sautéing or frying, you don't need it for this dish. Just use regular unsalted butter, plus a bit of olive oil. The oil raises the butter's smoking point and keeps it from burning.

**Mound that salad high.** Along with its distinctive flavor, arugula adds visual drama to this dish. The leaves are fairly flat—this is particularly true of baby arugula—so it's easy to layer them into a towering salad. (For a neat mounding trick, see *From Our Test Kitchen*, p. 71.) As the vinaigrette sinks down through the leaves into the savory breading, it melds the peppery flavor of the greens with the buttery richness of the sautéed chicken.

## wine choices

To accompany this dish, try a Northern Italian white wine with crisp citrus and mineral notes, such as a Soave Classico from Gini or Inama, or a Pinot Grigio from Livio Felluga or La Cadalora.

## For extra crunch, make your own dry breadcrumbs

Italian cooks generally make their own breadcrumbs from day-old bread. Homemade breadcrumbs aren't a must for this recipe, but if you have day-old bread and would like to make them, here's how:



*Begin with good, coarse-textured white bread. Trim the crusts, tear the bread into small pieces, spread on a baking sheet, and toast in a 350°F oven until the bread is dry but not brown.*



*When cool, toss the bread into a food processor and pulse into medium-fine crumbs, about the size of couscous grains.*

*Lori Longbotham is the author of several cookbooks, including Summer/Winter Chicken and the forthcoming Luscious Chocolate Desserts.*



# Milanese

Top a crisp cutlet with peppery arugula and ripe tomatoes for an easy, elegant summer meal

## Chicken Milanese

Serves two.

If you want to make this salad in the wintertime—and you will—use finely shaved fresh fennel instead of the tomatoes.

**1 tablespoon minced shallot**  
**2 teaspoons red-wine vinegar**  
**½ teaspoon Dijon mustard**  
**1 small clove garlic, mashed to a paste with ¼ teaspoon salt with the side of a chef's knife**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil**  
**1 medium (6-ounce) ripe tomato, cut into 8 wedges**  
**2 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves**

**1 large egg**  
**1 cup dry homemade or store-bought medium-fine breadcrumbs**  
**2 tablespoons unsalted butter**  
**4 ounces baby arugula, washed and spun dry (4 cups loosely packed)**

Whisk together the shallot, vinegar, mustard, garlic paste, and a large pinch of pepper in a large bowl. Add 2 tablespoons of the olive oil in a slow steady stream, whisking constantly, until the dressing emulsifies. Add the tomatoes to the vinaigrette and set aside until ready to serve, up to 2 hours.

Mix ¼ teaspoon each salt and pepper in a small cup. Pound the chicken to ¾ inch

thick between two sheets of waxed paper or plastic wrap. Season with some of the salt and pepper.

Beat the egg in a wide shallow bowl until smooth. Spread the breadcrumbs on a plate. Dip a chicken breast into the egg, coating thoroughly and shaking off any excess. Then dip it into the breadcrumbs, patting on the crumbs so both sides are well coated and shaking off any excess. Lay the breaded breast on a sheet of waxed paper. Repeat with the other chicken breast.

Heat the butter and 2 teaspoons olive oil in a heavy, large (preferably 12-inch) skillet over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot enough to sizzle a bread-

crumb, add the chicken breasts, keeping them separated. Cook, shaking the pan occasionally, until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Season each breast with some of the salt and pepper, gently turn over with tongs, taking care to keep the golden crust intact, and cook until the second side is golden brown, 1 to 2 minutes. Watch carefully and don't let the crumbs get too dark. Season with salt and pepper and drain for just a moment on paper towels.

To serve, add the arugula to the vinaigrette and tomatoes and toss. Arrange the sautéed chicken on warm serving plates and top each with a tall pile of the salad. ♦



Stepbystep

# Making a Light





# Berry Mousse

The steps to this ethereal, mouthwatering summer dessert are a breeze

BY JENNIFER MCLAGAN

**A**iry yet satisfying, light yet rich, a chilled mousse sounds like a complete contradiction, doesn't it? But this cool, luscious summer dessert is all that—and, as a result, it's a true marvel. I love making a chilled mousse for summer dinner parties: It doesn't heat up my kitchen, it must be made ahead, and it lends itself to being presented with a bit of panache. And best of all, from the very first spoonful, your guests will wonder how something so ethereal can have so much flavor.

A mousse is a base of flavored purée bound with egg yolks and sometimes a touch of gelatin and lightened with whipped egg whites and whipped cream. It can be made with many different flavors, but one of my summer favorites is this raspberry-blackberry version.

**An intensely flavored base is key.** Using the ripest berries will give the purée the bright flavor it needs so that the fruit shines through the eggs whites and cream.

**For the airiest mousse with the best volume, follow a few tips.** It's easiest to separate eggs when they're cold because the yolks are firmer. But do this before starting the recipe to let the whites warm up a bit: Egg whites at room temperature whip up to their most billowy and

voluminous. Be sure that the bowl and beaters are completely dry and free of grease, as water or grease will keep the whites from attaining their fullest volume. Follow the cues in the recipe to know when you've beaten in enough air.

When whipping cream, be sure it's well chilled. Cold cream whips up more easily into soft peaks. (A soft peak should fall back on itself when you lift the beater, and the cream will slide slowly when the bowl is tipped.)

Finally, folding in the whipped egg whites and cream is the most important step. Do this gently but firmly, so you maintain as much airy volume as possible but still have a well-blended mixture with no traces of white.

## reader review

A *Fine Cooking* reader gave this recipe a real-world test. Here are the results:

*"This mousse is such a gorgeous shade of pink! It really showcases the berries' beautiful colors and flavors. I especially like being able to prepare the mousse a day ahead and in individual servings, which make guests feel pampered. This is a light but flavorful dessert that could follow a rich entrée."*

—Paula De Grand,  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

**Serve individually or in one big bowl**



*Instead of goblets, try 4- to 6-ounce ramekins. Create height with a parchment collar secured with a thick rubber band, and refrigerate. Remove the collar just before garnishing and serving.*



*Or, put the mousse in a 6-cup bowl and garnish with a jumble of berries; to serve, scoop out individual servings.*

# Seven steps to a light, flavorful mousse

## Raspberry & Blackberry Mousse

*Yields 5 to 5½ cups; serves four to six.*

If you can't find ripe berries, don't use unripe, out-of-season fruit. Instead, look for individually quick frozen (IQF) berries, and use the same amounts.

**12 ounces fresh raspberries, rinsed and drained**  
**6 ounces fresh blackberries, rinsed and drained**  
**¾ cup granulated sugar**  
**1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice**  
**Pinch kosher salt**  
**3 large eggs, separated**  
**1¾ teaspoons unflavored gelatin**  
**Pinch cream of tartar**  
**½ cup whipping cream**



**1 Make the flavor base:** In a food processor, combine the raspberries, blackberries, ¼ cup of the sugar, the lemon juice, and salt. Purée until smooth. Pass the purée through a fine sieve; discard the contents of the sieve. Set the purée aside.



**2 Assemble a double boiler and prepare an ice bath:** Choose a medium stainless-steel bowl that can rest just inside a medium saucepan. Pour about 1 inch of water in the saucepan and bring to a boil. Choose a large bowl that's big enough for the medium bowl to fit inside it. Fill the large bowl with ice water; set aside.

**Cook the egg yolks:** Put the egg yolks, ¼ cup of the sugar, and ½ cup of the berry purée in the medium bowl. When the water in the saucepan boils, reduce the heat to a gentle simmer, and set the bowl with the berry mixture on the saucepan. Whisk until the mixture reaches 140°F on an instant-read thermometer. Turn off the heat but leave the bowl over the water and continue whisking for 3½ minutes. (If the temperature reaches 150°F, remove the bowl from the water, whisk until the temperature drops to 145°F, and then return the bowl to the water bath to continue whisking.) Remove the bowl from the saucepan, stir in the remaining purée, and set the medium bowl into the ice bath to cool. Don't pour the hot water out of the saucepan.



**3 Bloom and dissolve the gelatin:** Pour ¼ cup cold water into a small heatproof custard cup; sprinkle the gelatin evenly over the water in the cup. Let sit for about 5 minutes. Set the custard cup with the gelatin into the saucepan with the hot water and stir the gelatin mixture until the gelatin melts and becomes translucent, about 2 minutes.

Once the gelatin has melted, whisk it into the berry mixture. Whisk occasionally until the mixture cools to 50° to 55°F and thickens slightly.





**4 Beat the egg whites:** In a dry, grease-free bowl, beat the egg whites with a hand mixer (be sure the beaters are dry and free of grease, too) at low speed until frothy; add the cream of tartar (it helps stabilize the foam). Increase the speed to medium high. Beat until the whites turn opaque, begin to thicken, and look foamy, 1 ½ minutes. Gradually beat in the remaining ¼ cup sugar. Continue beating until the whites look thick and shiny (but not dry), resemble thickly whipped cream, and form medium peaks, about 3 minutes.



**5 Whip the cream:** In a separate bowl (no need to clean the beaters this time), beat the cream until soft peaks form, about 2 minutes.



**6 Lighten the berry mixture:** Whisk a couple of large spoonfuls of the beaten egg whites into the berry mixture to lighten it. Pour the ice and water out of the ice bath bowl; dry the bowl. Pour the lightened berry mixture into the cold bowl.



**7 Assemble the mousse:** Scrape the remaining egg whites and cream on top and fold gently with a rubber spatula until just combined. Spoon the mousse into individual glasses, into a 6-cup bowl, or into prepared individual soufflé dishes (for details, see p. 51; for sources, see p. 78). Refrigerate, covered, until firm, at least 4 hours but no longer than 24 hours.



*Jennifer McLagan is a food stylist and food writer in Toronto. ♦*

# Smoky, Tender

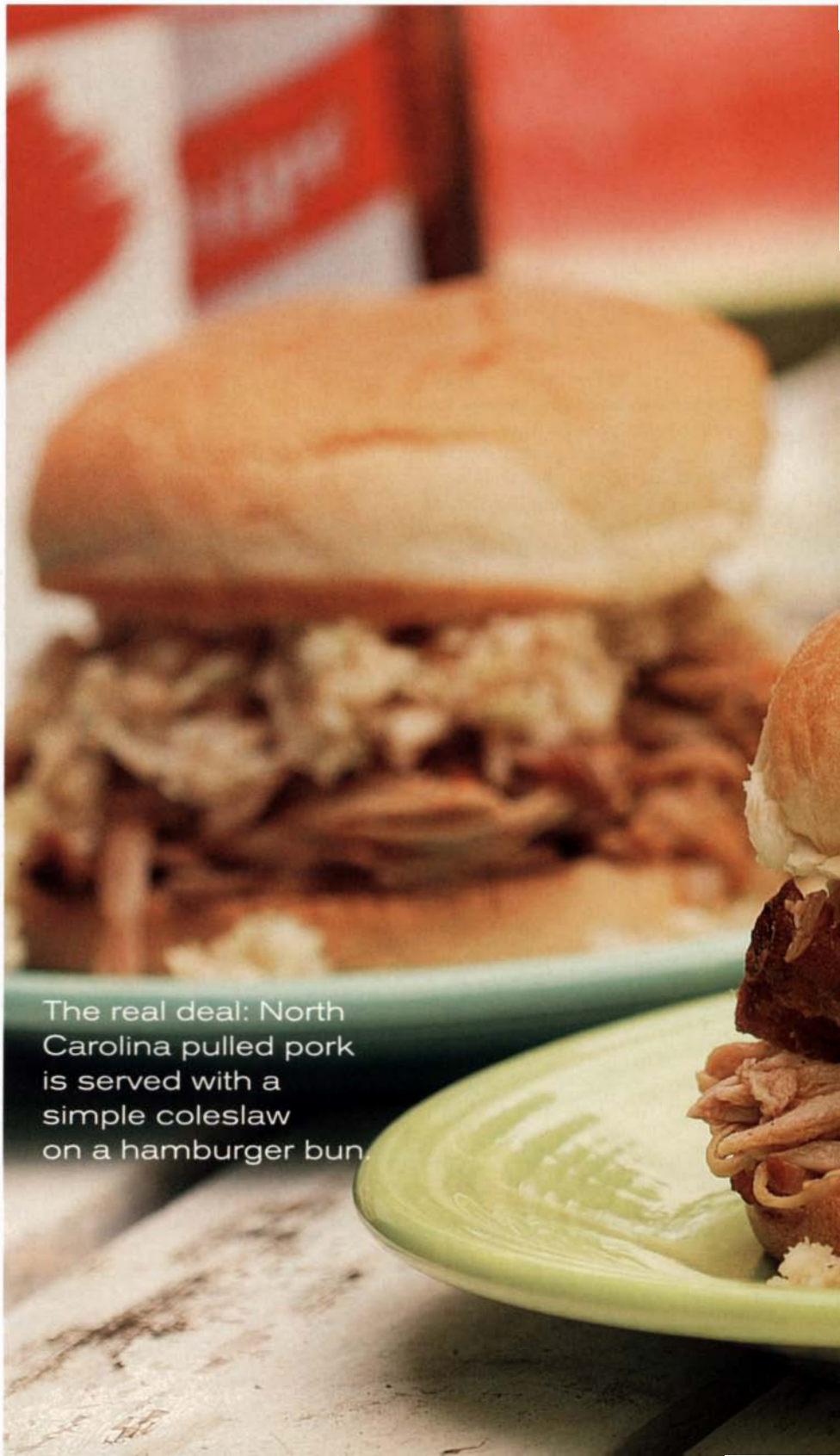
Slow cooking over indirect heat is the

BY ELIZABETH KARMEL

In my family, we are as obsessed with food as other North Carolinians are with football and basketball. When I was growing up, my rites of passage included trips to every kind of eating establishment imaginable, from Michelin three-star venues in Europe to shacks that could hardly be classified as restaurants. And as much as I love foie gras and remember my first crème brûlée, North Carolina barbecue is the food that stole my heart.

Texas has beef barbecue, but in North Carolina, pork—seasoned by wood smoke and cooked until fall-off-the-bone-tender—is the star. Typically, we start with a tough but flavorful cut like pork butt and cook it slowly over a constant low fire, either charcoal or gas. When grilling with this kind of indirect heat, hot air rotates around the food just like in a convection oven, so that the food roasts slowly and evenly. The meat's resulting melt-in-your-mouth texture and crisp, deeply caramelized exterior are positively addictive.

Besides low and slow cooking, there are two other tips you'll need to get the best flavor and texture in your barbecue. First, while the meat is still hot, you'll want to "pull" the pork—remove it from the bone and tear it into pieces by hand, or shred it with two forks. Then, you'll want to season it with a flavorful sauce. My favorite sauce for this dish is a sweet vinegar and pepper version that hails from Lexington, North Carolina. I've also included two other popular regional sauces, a South Carolina style honey-mustard Sauce and a Kansas City style sweet cola barbecue sauce, so that you can flavor your pork to suit your taste. But don't mistake any of these regional variations for barbecue heresy—no matter how pulled pork is dressed, the cooking technique is what makes the dish.



The real deal: North Carolina pulled pork is served with a simple coleslaw on a hamburger bun.



# Barbecued Pork

secret to delectable pulled pork



cook slowly & monitor the heat



pull the tender meat apart



add a spicy, sweet-sour sauce



# Low & slow grilling

How to set up your grill and cook with indirect heat

## Charcoal Grill

### What you'll need

- ❖ a large bag of charcoal briquettes
- ❖ a large chimney starter or electric starter
- ❖ a 9x13-inch disposable aluminum roasting pan
- ❖ about 1 cup hickory chips, soaked in water for at least 30 minutes and drained
- ❖ an oven thermometer

### Heat it up

Remove the grill's cooking grate. Light about 50 charcoal briquettes in either a large chimney starter or in a pyramid-shaped mound over the electric starter on the charcoal grate.

### Bank your fire

Once the briquettes are covered in a white-gray ash, pour or rake half of the briquettes to each side of the charcoal grate, and set the aluminum roasting pan between the two piles of coals. (The pan will catch fat and juices as the meat cooks.)

### Set up for smoking

Just before you're ready to cook, put the wet wood chips onto the charcoal. Replace the cooking grate.

### Keep it hot

Even if your grill has a built-in thermometer, set an oven thermometer directly on the cooking grate to get a more accurate reading. When it reads 325° to 350°F, position the meat in the center of the grate directly over the aluminum pan, cover, and proceed with the recipe. To maintain the cooking temperature, add about ten briquettes to each pile of coals every hour or so, or when the temperature gets below 250°F. (If you add briquettes before this point, your grill temperature may rise too high.) The best way to add briquettes to the fire is to light them 20 minutes before you need them (with a chimney starter or electric starter set in a heavy-duty disposable foil pan on a nonflammable surface, such as a walkway or patio) so that they're already hot when you add them to the grill.



## Gas Grill

### What you'll need

- ❖ an LP gas tank that's at least half full
- ❖ about 1 cup hickory chips, soaked in water for at least 30 minutes and drained
- ❖ an 8½x5½x1-inch disposable aluminum pan (if your grill has no smoking box)
- ❖ an oven thermometer

### Set up for smoking

Before heating the grill, put the soaked and drained wood chips in the small disposable foil pan and set the pan on the upper left corner of the grill, directly on the heat source (the flavorizer bars or ceramic rocks) under the cooking grate, or in the smoker box, if your grill has one.

### If your grill has three burners

Turn all the burners to high. Close the lid until the grill is hot (500° to 550°F) and the wood chips have begun to smoke, 10 to 20 minutes. Turn off the center burner and turn the others to medium low.



### If your grill has two burners

If the burners are near the perimeter of the grill, the center of the grate is already set up for indirect cooking. (If the burners aren't near the perimeter and are too close together, your meat will get too much direct heat. In this case, once the grill is up to temperature, you'll need to turn off one burner and put the meat over this side.) Set the burners to high. Close the lid until the grill is hot (500° to 550°F) and the wood chips have begun to smoke, 10 to 20 minutes. Turn both burners to medium low.

### Adjust the temperature

Set an oven thermometer on the center of the cooking grate. Adjust the controls to reach a temperature reading of 325° to 350°F. Put the meat in the center of the grate, cover, and proceed with your recipe. To maintain the cooking temperature, be sure to watch the heat and adjust the temperature controls as necessary.



## North Carolina Style Pulled Pork

*Yields 8 to 10 sandwiches.*

**1 medium-size pork butt, Boston butt, or untrimmed end-cut pork shoulder roast (7 to 9 pounds), preferably bone-in (see From Our Test Kitchen, p. 71)**

**Olive oil**

**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**Lexington Style Barbecue Sauce (at right, or your choice of sauce, or a rub and a mop; see p. 58)**

**Plain white hamburger buns or other rolls (such as Portuguese or Kaiser) for serving**  
**North Carolina Coleslaw (optional; below right)**

Set up a charcoal or gas grill for indirect cooking, as explained at left.

Pat the pork dry with paper towels. Don't trim any excess fat off the meat; this fat will baste the meat and keep it moist during cooking. With a pastry brush or your hands, brush or rub the pork with a thin coating of olive oil. Season generously with salt and pepper (unless using a rub; see p. 58). Set the pork aside on a tray until ready to cook.

Position the pork in the center of the cooking grate, fat side up. There's no need to turn the meat during cooking. Cook slowly with the lid closed (air vents should be open on a charcoal grill) on low heat (325° to 350°F) until an instant-read meat thermometer inserted into the middle of the pork registers 190° to 200°F, about 4 hours. The meat should be very tender and easy to pull apart. (If using a bone-in cut, you'll be able to wiggle the bone free.)

Let the meat rest on a cutting board or clean tray until just cool enough to handle, about 20 minutes. (It will pull apart most easily while still somewhat hot.) Pull the meat from the skin, bone, and fat (use rubber food-service gloves for easiest handling). Set aside any crisp bits of fat that have completely rendered and look almost burned. (In the barbecue circuit, these crisp pieces are known as "the burnt ends" and are the most coveted part of the pork.) Working quickly, shred the chunks of meat with two forks by crossing the forks and "pulling" the meat from the roast into small pieces. Alternately, you can chop the meat with a cleaver or shred it by hand. Put the meat in a large bowl. Chop the reserved crisp bits of fat with a chef's knife and mix them into the pulled pork. While the meat is still warm, combine with the barbecue sauce to moisten and season the meat, about 1½ cups. The pork can be made in advance up to this point; see the instructions at right for reheating.

Serve the pork on white hamburger buns. If using the Lexington Style Barbecue Sauce, top the pork with North Carolina Coleslaw. Serve with more barbecue sauce on the side, if you like.



## Lexington Style Barbecue Sauce

*Yields about 4 cups.*

**3 cups cider vinegar**  
**¾ cup tomato ketchup**  
**6 tablespoons light brown sugar**  
**3 tablespoons granulated sugar**  
**1½ tablespoons kosher salt**  
**2¼ teaspoons finely ground white pepper**  
**2¼ teaspoons red chile flakes**  
**¾ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**

In a medium bowl, whisk all the ingredients together and let sit for at least 10 minutes. The longer the sauce sits, the hotter it gets, as the vinegar brings out the heat of the chile flakes (so start with the amount of chile flakes called for and then add more to taste). Pour the sauce in a vinegar style bottle so you can pour and store it easily. It will keep almost indefinitely in the refrigerator. Return to room temperature before using.

## Make the pork ahead and reheat

To reheat pulled pork, put the meat in a 9x13-inch Pyrex baking dish or disposable foil pan, moisten the meat with more barbecue sauce, and cover tightly with foil. Heat in a 250°F oven for 30 to 40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Leftovers can also be heated in the microwave on medium in a Pyrex dish.

## North Carolina Coleslaw

*Yields about 6 cups.*

**1½ cups Lexington Style Barbecue Sauce (see the recipe above)**  
**6 cups (1¾ pounds) finely chopped or grated green cabbage (from about 1 small cabbage)**

In a large bowl, mix the sauce and cabbage. Let sit for at least 2 hours and up to overnight for flavors to blend, stirring occasionally. Refrigerate if not using the same day.





## Two more classic sauces

If you like mustard, you'll like the honey-mustard sauce below. The recipe originally comes from the area around Columbia, South Carolina, and it's delicious and sweet without being cloying. But it isn't a fancy barbecue sauce: The distinct flavor comes from yellow ballpark mustard. Although most popular Carolina mustard sauces exclude salt and opt instead for a sweet single note, I find that salt adds complexity to this sauce.

### South Carolina Style Honey-Mustard Sauce

*Yields 2 cups.*

Traditionally, South Carolinians make their sandwiches without the coleslaw on top, and the bun is buttered and toasted before being piled high with the mustard-dressed pulled pork.

**1 cup prepared yellow mustard**  
**¾ cup cider vinegar**  
**½ cup molasses**  
**¼ cup honey**  
**2 tablespoons peanut oil**  
**2½ teaspoons Worcestershire sauce**  
**1 teaspoon kosher salt**  
**½ teaspoon ground white pepper**  
**½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper**  
**Large pinch cayenne**

In a small stainless-steel or other nonreactive saucepan, combine the mustard, vinegar, molasses, honey, peanut oil, and Worcestershire sauce; whisk to combine. Continue stirring while bringing to a simmer over medium-high heat. Add the salt, white pepper, black pepper, and cayenne, and whisk to combine. Reduce the heat to maintain a simmer and let the sauce cook for another 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Let cool to warm or room temperature before using.

Kansas City pulled pork is moistened and topped with a sweet cola sauce, which is tomato-based, tangy, and rich. It has the flavor and ingredient profile of traditional American barbecue sauce—try it on barbecued chicken, too.

### Kansas City Style Sweet Cola Barbecue Sauce

*Yields about 3 cups.*

**4 tablespoons unsalted butter**  
**1 large onion (9 ounces), chopped**  
**4 cloves garlic, chopped**  
**1 can (12 ounces) cola**  
**1 cup tomato ketchup**  
**3 tablespoons tomato paste**  
**½ cup cider vinegar**  
**½ cup firmly packed brown sugar**  
**¼ cup Worcestershire sauce**  
**2 teaspoons ground ancho chile powder or New Mexico chile powder**  
**1 teaspoon ground white pepper**  
**1 teaspoon kosher salt**

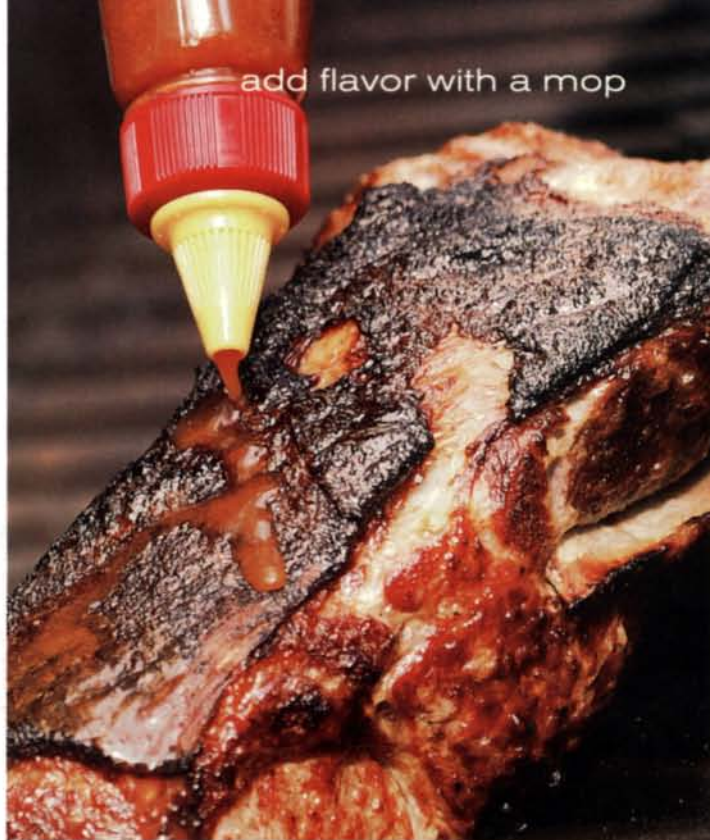
Melt the butter in a heavy 4-quart saucepan over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic and cook, stirring occasionally, until translucent, slightly golden, and soft, about 10 minutes. Whisk in the remaining ingredients and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the sauce thickens, 35 to 45 minutes. Taste the sauce and adjust the salt and pepper.

Let the sauce cool until it's warm but no longer hot, about 10 minutes. Purée in a blender or with an immersion blender. Let the sauce cool and pour it into a clean glass jar for storing. The sauce can be made ahead and kept for up to 1 week in the refrigerator.

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*Elizabeth Karmel's new book, Grill Friends: One Girl's Guide to Taming the Flame, will be published next spring. ♦*

add flavor with a mop



## Try tangy rubs and mops instead of sauce

Another great way to flavor barbecued pork is a rub-mop combination. Dry rubs for pulled pork are usually a combination of sugar, salt, and piquant spices. Use your own homemade version or your favorite store-bought brand.

Accompany a dry rub with a mop. Thinner and less sweet than a sauce, a good mop adds moisture and subtle flavor and promotes caramelization.

To make a mop, I usually combine 12 ounces beer (I prefer a domestic kind like Budweiser), ½ cup Sweet Cola Barbecue Sauce (see the recipe at left, or use a store-bought sauce), and 1 tablespoon barbecue rub. Let the mixture sit for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Put the mop in a squeeze bottle (or leave it in a bowl) and set it aside.

Before grilling, pat the pork dry and brush or rub it with a thin coat of olive oil. Rub the dry rub over the entire surface of the pork. Grill as directed in the North Carolina Style Pulled Pork recipe (on p. 57), basting with the mop after 45 minutes and then every 40 minutes thereafter. To ensure that the crust is dry, caramelized, and crisp when you remove the pork from the grill, don't baste during the last 20 minutes of cooking time.



An easy method and  
a little time yield a  
deliciously versatile  
ingredient to use  
dozens of ways

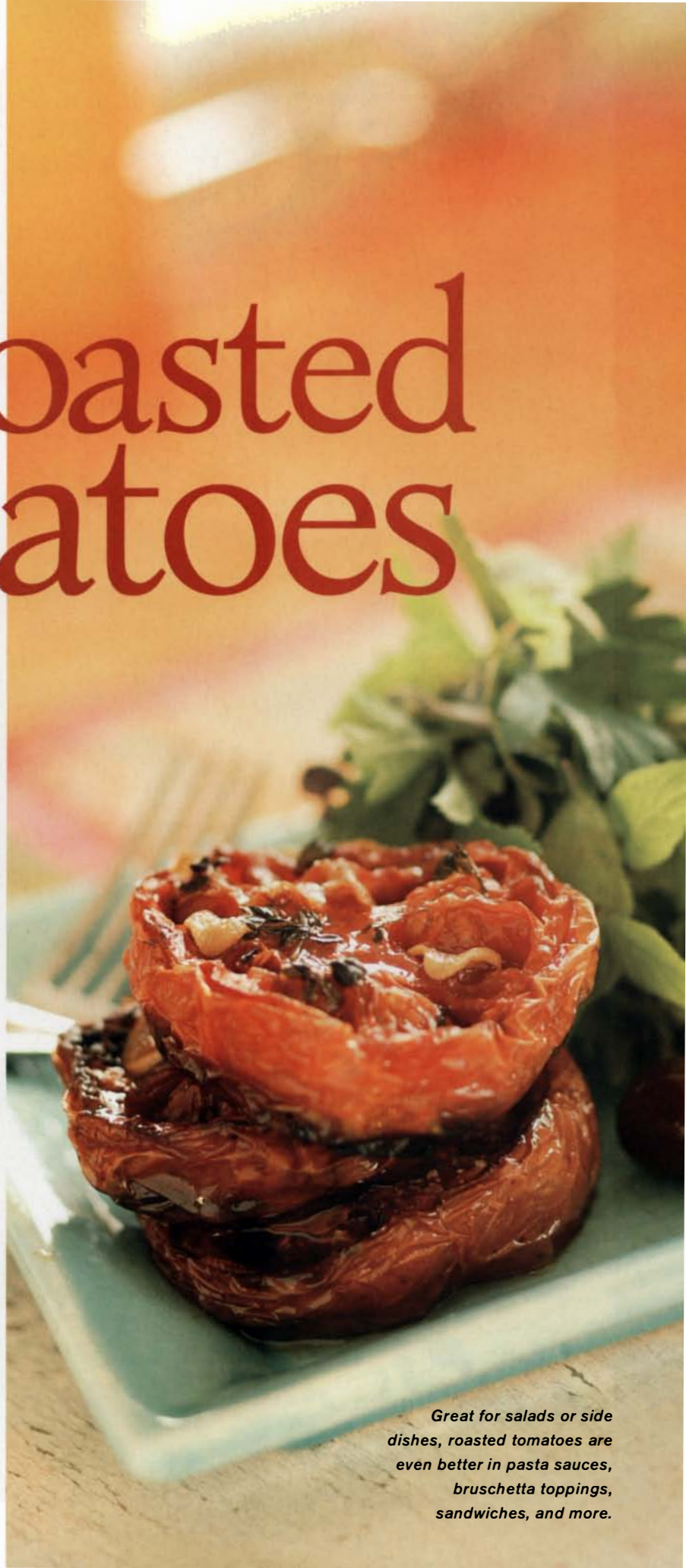
# slow-roasted tomatoes

BY SUSIE MIDDLETON

**H**ere's a tip: If you're looking for a secret ingredient to make your summer meals more special, you have to try slow-roasting tomatoes. This technique is so easy and yields such delicious results that I know you'll add it to your repertoire once you've tried it. While you're puttering around the house this weekend, tuck a pan of tomatoes in the oven, come back a few hours later, and take a look.

Not only does slow-roasting concentrate and caramelize the intense flavor of a beefsteak tomato, but it also gives it a meatier, more robust texture. The roasted tomatoes become versatile ingredients, perfect for tossing into pasta or salads, layering on sandwiches and crostini, or just using as a terrific side dish for grilled or roasted meats. They keep in the refrigerator for a week (or longer, I suppose, if you can manage not to eat them all first), and you can freeze them, too. A bonus is the lovely tomato-infused olive oil left over after roasting; drizzle it over grilled vegetables or on crusty bread, or use it in a vinaigrette.

**The only secret to roasting tomatoes is not to undercook them.** The technique is simple: cut tomatoes in half, spread them in one layer on a rimmed baking sheet, sprinkle with salt and herbs, and coat generously in olive oil. Roast slowly (for about 3 hours) until the tomatoes are a deep, rich brown and very collapsed. You can certainly use this method on less-than-ripe tomatoes—and they will taste better after roasting—but if you start with really meaty, juicy-ripe tomatoes, the end result will be out of this world.



*Great for salads or side  
dishes, roasted tomatoes are  
even better in pasta sauces,  
bruschetta toppings,  
sandwiches, and more.*





ready for the oven

after 3 hours



## Slow-Roasted Summer Tomatoes

*Yields about 24 tomato halves.*

If you don't have fresh thyme, you can use another fresh hardy herb like oregano or rosemary—or leave it out altogether.

**3 tablespoons plus 1 cup extra-virgin olive oil**  
**4½ to 5 pounds medium-large ripe**  
**beefsteak tomatoes (about 12),**  
**stemmed but not cored**

**Kosher salt**

**Granulated sugar**

**Scant 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar**

**3 to 4 cloves garlic, very thinly sliced**

**2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves**

Heat the oven to 350°F. Line a 12x17-inch rimmed baking sheet (for sources, see p. 78) or two 9x12-inch rimmed baking sheets with foil. (Don't use unrimmed sheets or the oil and juices will spill out; instead, use several shallow gratin dishes.) If you have parchment, put a sheet on top of the foil. Coat the pan or pans with 3 tablespoons of the olive oil.

Cut the tomatoes in half through the equator (not through the stem). Arrange the halves, cut side up, on the baking sheet, turning to coat their bottoms with some of the oil. Sprinkle a pinch each of salt and sugar over each half, and drizzle each with a few drops of balsamic vinegar. Arrange the garlic over the halves and top with a generous sprinkling of thyme. Pour the remaining 1 cup olive oil over and around the tomato halves.

Roast in the center of the oven until the tomatoes are concentrated, dark reddish brown (with deep browning around the edges and in places on the pan) and quite collapsed (at least half their original height; they will collapse more as they cool), about 3 hours for very ripe, fleshy tomatoes, about 4 hours for tomatoes that are less ripe or that have a high water content. Let cool for at least 10 to 15 minutes and then serve warm or at room temperature. Be sure to reserve the tomato oil (keep refrigerated for up to a week) to use on its own or in a vinaigrette. To store the tomatoes, refrigerate for up to a week or freeze for up to a couple of months. They'll continue to release juice during storage.

**Quicker-cooking variation:** Remove the seeds and gelatinous pulp (poke them out with your fingers) before roasting. These tomatoes cook more quickly (check for doneness after 2 hours) but yield a slightly flatter, less meaty—but perfectly pleasant—result.

**Plum tomato variation:** Substitute plum tomatoes, cut in half through the stem end and seeded. The roasting time will be about 2 hours. Roasted plum tomato halves hold together particularly well; layer them in a terrine or roll them up, stuffed with goat cheese and basil, as an appetizer.



# A dozen delicious ways to use roasted tomatoes



❖ **Make a simple crostini** by topping a small piece of grilled bread with a roasted tomato half and a little slivered basil. Or **make a bruschetta topping** by chopping the tomatoes and folding in the basil.

❖ **For antipasto**, arrange a small stack of roasted tomatoes with a few good olives, a slice or two of prosciutto,

a piece of really good Parmigiano Reggiano, some greens, and a piece of crusty bread.

❖ **For an easy hors d'oeuvre**, top a crock of warmed goat cheese with chopped roasted tomatoes, a few pine nuts, and a drizzle of pesto. Serve with crackers.

❖ **Make a sandwich** of aged Cheddar, crisp bacon, roasted tomato halves, and herbed mayonnaise.

❖ **As a warm side dish for grilled lamb**, reheat roasted tomato halves with a little crumbled feta on top. Garnish with fresh mint. Drizzle the lamb with the tomato oil.

❖ **Make a summery spinach or arugula salad** by adding fresh chopped roasted tomatoes, corn kernels, and

grilled red onions. Toss with Lemon-Sherry Vinaigrette (see the recipe below). Add sliced grilled chicken or grilled shrimp to make it a main dish.

❖ **Mix up a quick pasta sauce** of roasted tomatoes chopped and mixed with their juices. Or make a **richly flavored puttanesca sauce** by adding capers, olives, and anchovies to the roasted tomato base.

❖ **Make a bed for grilled steak** by overlapping roasted tomato halves. Top with arugula.

❖ **Fill omelets, frittatas, and crêpes** with finely chopped roasted tomatoes and bold cheeses.



## Lemon-Sherry Vinaigrette with Roasted Tomato Oil

*Yields about 2/3 cup.*

This vinaigrette is equally delicious using all olive oil if you don't have roasted tomato oil on hand. Drizzle it on grilled fish or steamed green beans, or toss it with mixed greens, fresh corn, and diced roasted tomatoes for a delicious salad.

**1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil**  
**3 tablespoons roasted tomato oil**  
 (from the recipe at left)  
**2 tablespoons sherry vinegar**  
**Finely grated zest of 1 small lemon**  
 (about 1 teaspoon)  
**1/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard**  
**1/4 teaspoon kosher salt**  
**Freshly ground black pepper**  
 (about 6 grinds)  
**Large pinch granulated sugar**

**3-inch sprig fresh thyme**  
**3-inch sprig fresh rosemary**  
**1/2 clove garlic**

In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine the olive oil, tomato oil, sherry vinegar, lemon zest, mustard, salt, pepper, and sugar. Shake vigorously to combine. Add the herb sprigs and garlic clove. Shake well before using. You can use the vinaigrette right away, although the herbs, lemon, and garlic will intensify the flavor slightly as they infuse. This vinaigrette keeps in the refrigerator for a week.

*Susie Middleton is the editor of Fine Cooking.* ♦



# Updating American Fruit Desserts

New toppings and summer fruit combinations give a fresh spin to these homey classics

BY GREG PATENT

Many old-fashioned American fruit desserts have fanciful yet obscure names, like pandowdy, betty, buckle, and grunt. Though the names may seem odd, the desserts themselves are downright delicious and easy to make. They're really just kissing cousins of the more familiar cobbler—simple pairings of fruit baked with dough on top.

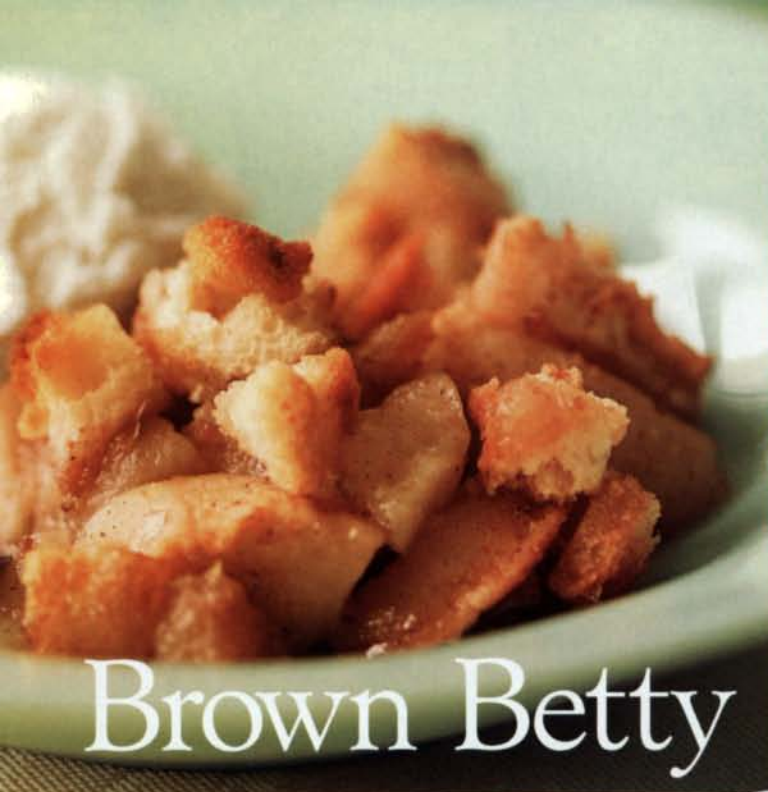
Because we have so many marvelous fresh fruits in our markets at this time of year, I've updated these old-time recipes using fruit combinations that may never have been used in the "olden days," and I've given some of the toppings new twists. For example, pandowdies were historically made with apples and bread dough. In my revised recipe, I combined peaches and blueberries and exchanged the traditional bread dough for a buttery pastry topped with sliced almonds.

The one dessert I've left almost unchanged is the Apple Brown Betty. This is still best when made with apples, but instead of using dried breadcrumbs, I found that pieces of bread torn from a chewy loaf of Italian or French bread make for a delicious texture contrast with the soft fruit.

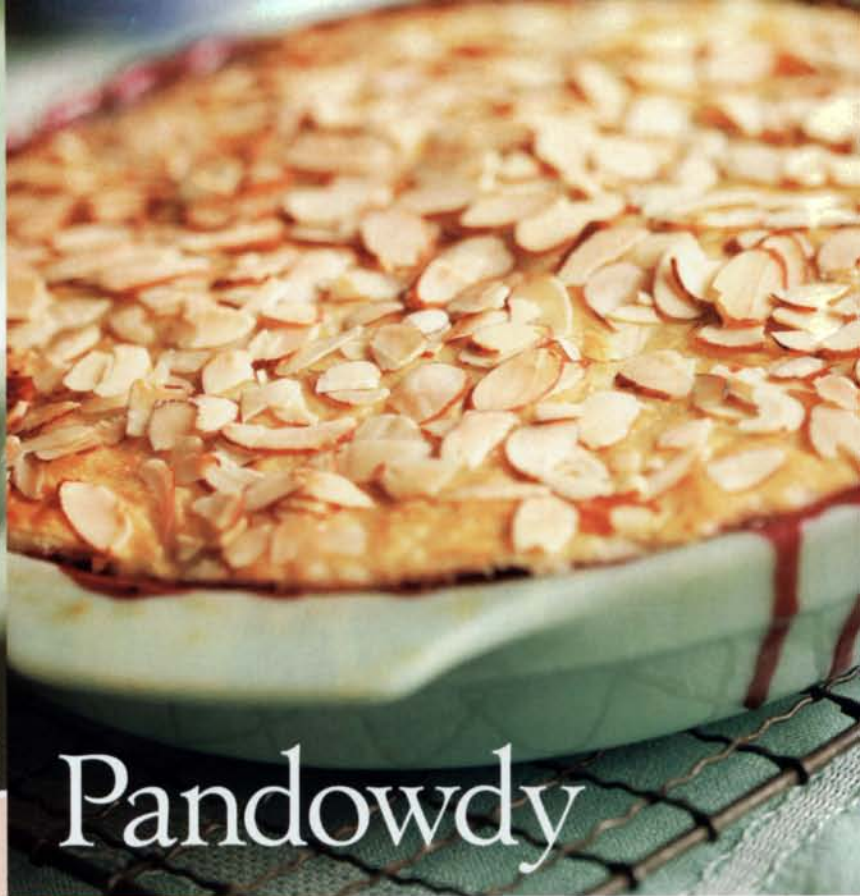
All of these homespun desserts are ideal for picnics, barbecues, and informal parties, outdoors or in. They're delicious on their own, but you can also serve them with lightly sweetened whipped cream or vanilla ice cream.







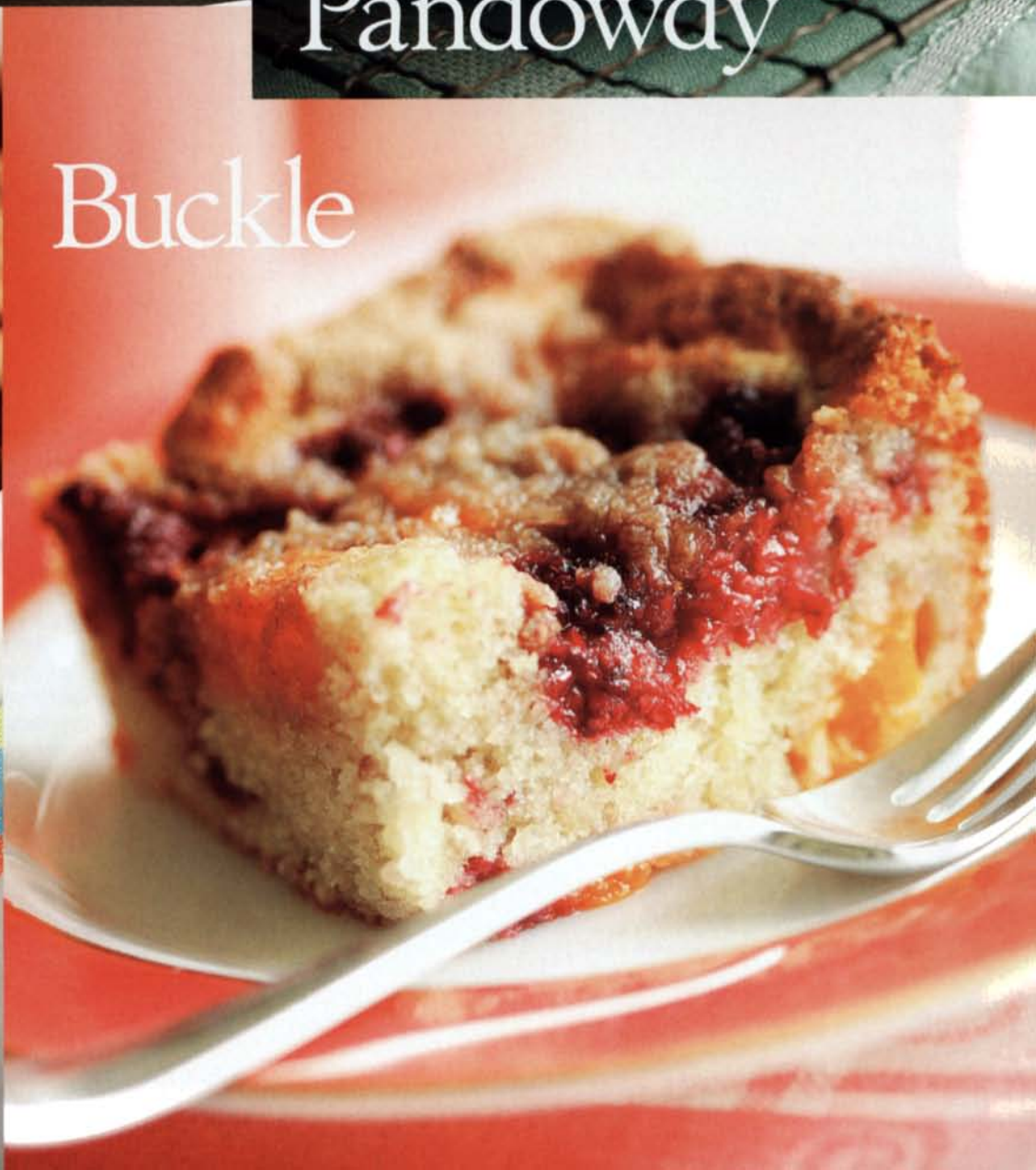
Brown Betty



Pandowdy

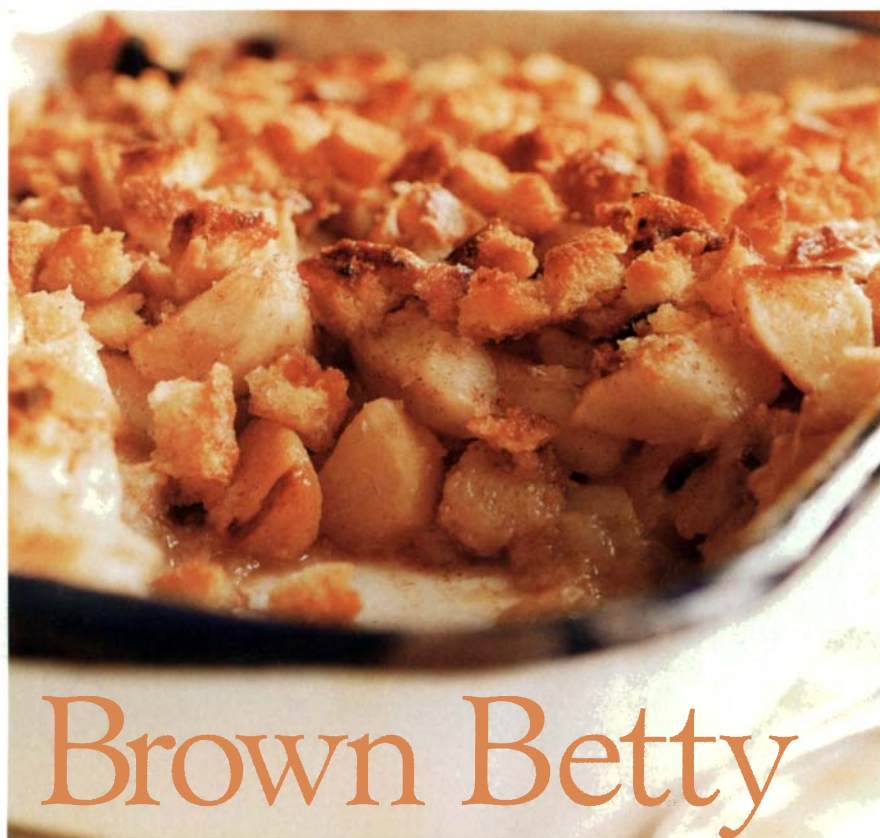


Gruut



Buckle





## Apple Brown Betty with Rustic Crumbs

*Serves eight to nine.*

This dessert is best when very fresh, but it's also quite good reheated the next day for breakfast.

**12-ounce loaf French or Italian bread**  
**4 ounces (½ cup) unsalted butter**  
**3 pounds tart apples (about 8 medium), peeled, quartered, cored, and cut crosswise into ½-inch-thick slices**  
**2 tablespoons lightly packed finely grated lemon zest, preferably grated on a rasp**  
**3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice**  
**¾ cup granulated sugar**  
**1¼ teaspoons ground cinnamon**  
**¼ teaspoon ground allspice**  
**¼ teaspoon table salt**  
**⅓ cup Calvados or ⅔ cup apple cider**  
**2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract**

Position a rack in the middle of the oven and heat the oven to 225°F. Remove and discard the crusts from the bread and tear the bread into roughly ½-inch pieces for a total of 6 ounces or 5 loosely packed cups. Spread the bread pieces on a large rimmed baking sheet and bake, stirring once or twice, until the bread is completely dry but not browned, about 40 minutes. Set the pan on a rack and let the bread cool completely (it may be toasted three or four days ahead and stored airtight at room temperature in a zip-top bag).

Heat the oven to 375°F. Melt the butter in a large (preferably 12-inch) skillet over medium-low heat. Add the dried bread and cook, stirring occasionally, until the butter is absorbed and some of the bread has turned golden brown, about 5 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and set aside.

In a large bowl, combine the apples with the lemon zest and juice. In a small bowl, combine the sugar, cinnamon, allspice, and salt. Add the sugar mixture to the apples and toss to combine well. In a liquid measuring cup, combine the Calvados with ⅓ cup water (or the apple cider, if using, without any water) and the vanilla.

Spread a third of the bread in the bottom of a 9-inch square baking pan. Spread half the apple mixture over the bread and drizzle with half of the Calvados or cider mixture. Sprinkle half of the remaining bread over the apples and spread the remaining apples evenly over the bread. Drizzle with the remaining Calvados or cider mixture and sprinkle the last of the bread evenly on top.

Bake until the apples are tender (test with the tip of a paring knife), the juices are bubbly, and the crumb topping is a deep golden brown, about 1 hour. Halfway through baking, use a wide metal spatula to press down gently on the top of the betty to be sure the apples are bathed with the juices. Let cool on a rack for about 20 minutes; the betty will settle a bit as it cools. Serve warm.

**VARIATION:** Add ½ cup dried sour cherries to the apple mixture.

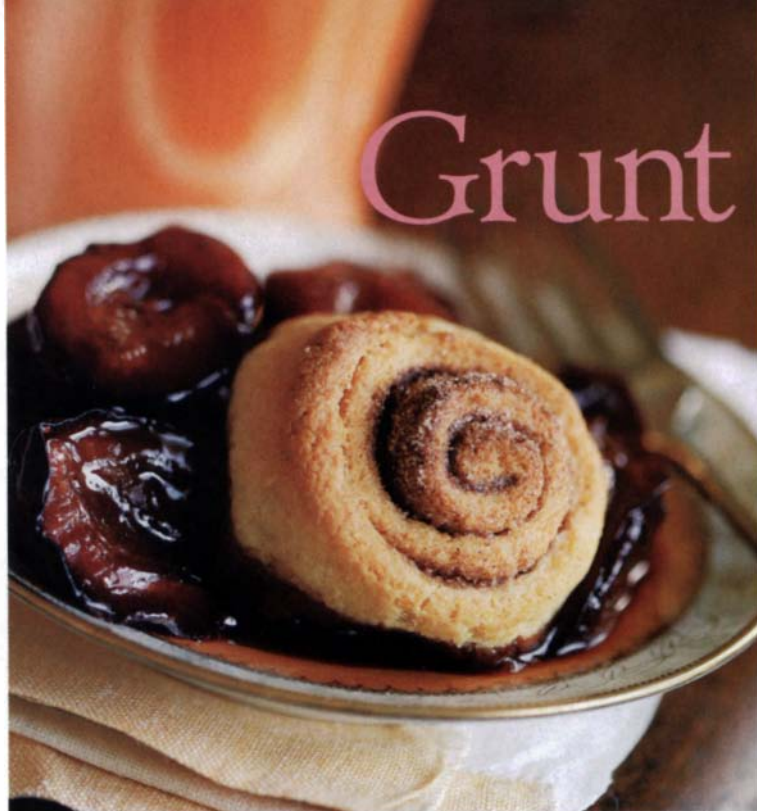
This is a delicious dish of sugared and spiced apples layered with butter-toasted breadcrumbs. Calvados (French apple brandy) or apple cider and vanilla are poured over the apples for extra flavor and moistness.

Although we don't know this dessert's origin for certain, it probably came about like so many of America's early fruit desserts, as a way for a housewife to quickly make a treat for her family by using up what she had on hand—some stale bread and apples, which were readily available.

Apples were the one fruit almost everyone had access to, since the Pilgrims brought apple seedlings with them on the Mayflower in 1620. In my research, I haven't been able to discover why this dish is called "betty," but the earliest version I've found is from an 1856 cookbook, where it's named "Apple Brown Betsy."

Use tart, semi-firm apples, preferably a mix of varieties; Granny Smith and Gala are good together. Or use two or three of these varieties: Macoun, McIntosh, Jonathan, Winesap, Newtown Pippin, Northern Spy, and Honeygold.





## Plum Grunt with Swirled Biscuit Topping

*Serves ten to twelve.*

I use Italian prune plums, but feel free to use Santa Rosa plums or a combination.

### FOR THE FILLING:

**1 cup granulated sugar**  
**1 tablespoon cornstarch**  
**½ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg**  
**⅛ teaspoon ground cloves**  
**2 tablespoons unsalted butter**  
**¼ cup molasses (I use Grandma's brand)**  
**2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract**  
**3 pounds prune plums (about 40), halved and pitted**

### FOR THE BISCUIT DOUGH:

**5½ ounces (1¼ cups) unbleached all-purpose flour**  
**1¼ ounces (½ cup) yellow cornmeal**  
**2 tablespoons granulated sugar**  
**2 teaspoons baking powder**  
**¼ teaspoon baking soda**  
**¼ teaspoon table salt**  
**2 ounces (¼ cup) cold unsalted butter, cut into tablespoon-size pieces**  
**½ cup sour cream**

### FOR THE BISCUIT SWIRL FILLING:

**2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted**  
**2 tablespoons granulated sugar**  
**1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**

**Make the filling:** In a small bowl, combine the sugar, cornstarch, nutmeg, and cloves. Melt the butter in a heavy 4-quart saucepan over medium heat. Stir in the molasses, vanilla, and sugar mixture. Cook, stirring with a wooden spoon, until the sugar is dissolved, about 2 minutes.

Add the plums and stir to combine well. Raise the heat to high and bring the mixture to a boil. Cover the pan, reduce the heat to medium, and cook for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally, just to partially cook the plums. Remove the pan from the heat and set aside, uncovered, until needed.

Position rack in the lower third and bottom of the oven; heat the oven to 425°F.

**Make the biscuits:** In a large bowl, whisk the flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt to blend. Add the butter pieces and cut them in with a pastry blender or two table knives until the butter pieces resemble small peas. Add the sour cream and work it into the flour mixture with a rubber spatula until you have several large lumps of dough that appear quite dry. Turn the shaggy-looking mixture out onto an unfloured work surface and use both hands to quickly knead the clumps of dough just until they gather into one mass. The dough will be stiff and only slightly sticky. Shape the dough into a 4x6-inch rectangle. Lightly flour your work surface. With a long side of the dough nearest you, roll the dough into an 8x12-inch rectangle. Turn the dough over from time to time during the rolling and dust it lightly with flour if it's sticky. Square the edges of the dough with your fingertips to keep it in a neat rectangle.

Brush the dough with the melted butter. Whisk the sugar and cinnamon in a small bowl to combine and sprinkle it evenly over the dough, leaving a 1-inch margin at the dough's farthest edge

Don't let the name put you off. This dessert of baked fruit topped with biscuits or dumplings is the height of elegant simplicity. My version is a dish of lightly spiced plums baked in a bath of slightly thickened juices with golden cinnamon-swirled biscuits on top.

Many old recipes say to steam a grunt in a covered container on top of the stove, but I prefer the oven because the topping becomes firm and offers a delicious textural contrast with the soft fruit. Grunts can be made with any fruit, but plums are particularly good because of their color, tartness, and juiciness.

As for the name, I've read it came about because of the grunting sound the dish makes when it comes out of the oven, but my grunts have always been silent.



*Starting with a long end, use both hands to gently roll the dough up like a jelly roll.*

uncovered. Roll up the dough like a jelly roll, starting with the long edge nearest you. Pinch the seam's edges to seal. With the seam side facing down, cut the roll with a sharp knife into twelve 1-inch slices.

Pour the plum mixture (which may be warm or hot) into a wide baking dish (about 8x12 inches, or 2½ quarts, so the biscuits will fit in a single layer). Arrange the biscuits, cut side up, over the fruit mixture, leaving an inch or so of space between the biscuits. Put the pan in the lower third of the oven and set a baking sheet lined with aluminum foil on the rack below to catch any juices which might bubble over. Bake until the biscuits are well browned and the juices are very bubbly, 25 to 30 minutes. Put the pan on a rack to let cool. Serve warm or at room temperature.

## Spiced Peach-Blueberry Pandowdy

*Serves eight to ten.*

### FOR THE PASTRY:

**4½ ounces (1 cup) unbleached all-purpose flour**  
**1 tablespoon granulated sugar**  
**¼ teaspoon table salt**  
**4 ounces (½ cup) cold unsalted butter, cut into tablespoon-size pieces**  
**1 teaspoon cider vinegar**

### FOR THE TOPPING:

**1 large egg yolk**  
**1 ounce (⅓ cup) sliced almonds**

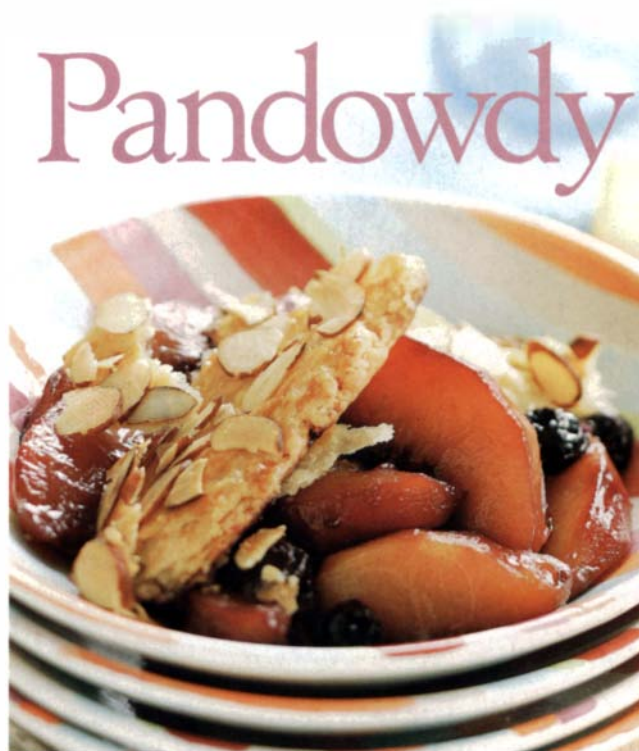
### FOR THE FILLING:

**3 pounds (6 to 7 large) firm, ripe peaches or nectarines**  
**5 ounces (1 cup) blueberries**  
**¼ cup granulated sugar**  
**¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar**  
**2½ tablespoons cornstarch**  
**¼ teaspoon table salt**  
**Large pinch allspice**  
**1 teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger**  
**1 teaspoon finely grated lime zest**  
**1 tablespoon fresh lime juice**

**Make the pastry:** Put the flour, sugar, salt, and butter in a food processor. Pulse four times for 1 second each. The butter will still be quite chunky. Combine the cider vinegar with 3½ tablespoons ice water in a liquid measuring cup. Slowly pour the water mixture through the feed tube while pulsing very rapidly—a fraction of a second for each pulse—until the dough looks like it will gather into a mass, about 30 quick pulses. Stop just short of the dough forming a ball. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and shape it into a 4-inch round or square (depending on the shape of your pan; see the filling directions at right). Wrap tightly in plastic and refrigerate for 1 hour or up to a day.

Roll the dough on a lightly floured surface into a 10½-inch round or a 9½-inch square. Prick with a fork at 1-inch intervals and carefully set the dough on an ungreased baking sheet. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Position a rack in the middle of the oven and heat the oven to 400°F. In a small bowl, mix the egg yolk and ½ teaspoon water with a fork. Brush all of it over the chilled pastry and sprinkle with the almonds. Bake the pastry until lightly golden brown, about 15 minutes (it won't be fully cooked). Set the baking sheet on a rack to cool. While the pastry bakes, assemble the filling.



**Make the filling:** Butter a round 10x2-inch ovenproof dish or 9-inch square baking pan.

While the pastry is baking, bring a small pot of water to boil. (If using nectarines, skip this step.) Using a slotted spoon, put one peach in the water. Wait 45 seconds and then immerse the peach in a medium bowl of ice water until cool enough to handle and slip off the skin. (If the skin doesn't come off easily, repeat the blanching and cooling steps.) Repeat with the remaining peaches.

Halve the peaches or nectarines and remove the pits (quarter the fruits if they cling to the pits). Cut the fruit into ½-inch-thick slices and set aside. Rinse the blueberries under cold tap water, drain, and pat dry on paper towels.

In a large bowl, whisk together the sugar, brown sugar, cornstarch, salt, and allspice. Add the peaches or nectarines, blueberries, ginger, lime zest, and lime juice. Fold together with a rubber spatula, making sure the ginger and lime zest are evenly distributed, and turn the mixture into the prepared pan. Cover loosely with foil.

Bake for 30 minutes at 400°F. Reduce the heat to 350°F and continue baking until the fruit is just tender and the juices are just beginning to bubble, about 15 minutes. Slip the pastry on top of the fruit and continue baking

until the pastry and almonds are a rich golden brown and the juices appear thick and bubbly, another 20 to 25 minutes. Halfway through this time, use the back of a large metal spatula to gently press the pastry into the fruit so that the two integrate better. Set the pandowdy on a cooling rack. Serve warm or at room temperature.



*Carefully set the baked pastry on top of the partially baked fruit.*

A pandowdy—sweetened fruit baked with a topping of dough—dates back to Colonial times. This simple dessert probably came about when a housewife had a lump of dough left over from breadmaking and figured it would make a nice topping for fruit, which usually meant apples. Apple pandowdy was immortalized in a 1940s song by Dinah Shore, where she rhapsodized about the dessert's ability “to make the sun come out when heavens are cloudy.”

Today, pandowdies aren't limited to apples and bread doughs. Here, a round of rich, pre-baked pastry is set over a mix of spiced peaches and blueberries.



Buckles can be made with just about any fruit, but berries are almost always included.

### Apricot-Raspberry Buckle

*Serves eight to ten.*

#### FOR THE STREUSEL:

**1½ ounces (⅓ cup minus 1 tablespoon)** unbleached all-purpose flour  
**¼ cup** granulated sugar  
**1 teaspoon** ground cinnamon  
**Pinch** salt  
**2 ounces (¼ cup)** cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

#### FOR THE CAKE:

**6 ounces (1½ cups)** unbleached all-purpose flour  
**1½ teaspoons** baking powder  
**½ teaspoon** table salt  
**6 ounces (12 tablespoons)** unsalted butter, softened at room temperature  
**1 cup** granulated sugar  
**1½ teaspoons** pure vanilla extract  
**¼ teaspoon** pure almond extract  
**3 large** eggs  
**¾ pound** firm, ripe fresh apricots (about 4 large), halved, pitted, and cut into ¾-inch pieces (to yield 2 cups)  
**2 cups (about 8 ounces)** fresh raspberries

Position a rack in the lower third of the oven and heat the oven to 375°F. Butter a 9-inch square baking pan.

**Make the streusel:** In a medium bowl, combine the flour, sugar, cinnamon, and salt. Add the cold butter and cut it in with a pastry blender or two table knives until the butter pieces resemble small peas. Refrigerate until needed.

**Make the cake:** Sift the flour, baking powder, and salt into a bowl and set aside. With an electric stand mixer (a hand mixer is fine, too), beat the butter with the paddle attachment on medium speed until smooth, about 1 minute. Add ¼ cup of the sugar and the vanilla and almond extracts. Beat 1 minute on medium speed. Gradually add the remaining

¾ cup sugar while beating on medium speed. Turn off the mixer and use a rubber spatula to scrape the bowl and beater. Beat on medium-high speed until pale and slightly fluffy (the sugar will not be dissolved), about 3 minutes. Reduce the speed to medium and add the eggs, one at a time, mixing until the batter is smooth each time. Stop and scrape the bottom and sides of the bowl and the beater. On low speed, add the flour mixture and beat only until incorporated. Remove the bowl from the mixer and scrape the beater. The batter will be thick.

Add half of the apricots and half of the raspberries to the batter and fold them in gently with a large rubber spatula. Some of the raspberries will break, giving the batter an attractive pinkish cast. (When baked, the pink will disappear.) Spread the batter into the prepared pan and distribute the remaining fruit evenly on top.

Sprinkle the streusel over the fruit. Bake until the cake springs back in the center when lightly pressed and a toothpick comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes. Let the cake cool in its pan on a rack. Serve warm or at room temperature.



A buckle, a tender yellow cake topped with fruit and a streusel topping, is a kind of crumb cake. My version features a rich yellow cake batter with fresh apricots and raspberries, both in the cake and on top. Just what “buckle” means is uncertain. Most likely it has to do with the fact that the streusel topping sinks (or buckles) into the cake at irregular intervals, but maybe it's just that your knees will buckle when you taste how delicious it is. Be that as it may, buckles are easy to make and beautiful to look at. This dessert is best when very fresh, but leftovers are delicious for breakfast.

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*Greg Patent is the author of Baking in America, which won the James Beard award for best baking book of 2003. ♦*

BY JENNIFER ARMENTROUT

**M**ost days, the test kitchen is a busy but fairly quiet place—just me and sometimes a culinary school intern testing and perfecting recipes by the pros for you, the home cook. But over three action-packed days in April, the situation got reversed. We tested the top thirty recipes from our America's Best Home Cook contest, all submitted by amateur home cooks. Two happy discoveries

## Eight editors cooked up a storm in two average-size kitchens.

were made: We learned that many of you are creatively using ingredients and techniques that you learned about in these very pages. And we also discovered that our test kitchen can take a serious workout. We had eight editors cooking up a storm in two average-size kitchens, and not only did we all survive, but no fights broke out over oven space or pairs of tongs. In fact, we had a great time.

The results of all this cooking? We narrowed it down to fifteen regional semi-finalists, who will go on to compete in cook-offs in Sur La Table stores across the country. In our next issue, we'll share the contest results. Stay tuned.

## Fresh crab is worth the hunt

While testing the recipe for Chilled Tomato Soup with Crab Salad on p. 47, we discovered that fresh crabmeat can sometimes be hard to find. Many supermarkets don't carry it because it's expensive, highly perishable, and unprofitable if they can't sell it quickly. Instead, what you find at these supermarket fish counters is pasteurized crabmeat with a shelf life of nearly a year. We decided to do a taste test of pasteurized crab, and the results were a unanimous thumbs-down: The funky flavor bore little resemblance to the fresh stuff. We found sweet, fresh crabmeat at a small local fish market; it was worth seeking it out.

## What we mean by: medium or fine sieve

Bowl-shaped metal sieves are among the kitchen's most versatile tools. They're used to drain liquids from solids, refine the texture of sauces, and sift dry ingredients. We have about fifteen different sieves in the test kitchen, but only three of them get used regularly, and these are the ones you should have in your kitchen, too.

Look for sieves with handles made of heatproof rubber or metal; avoid plastic handles. The metal mesh has to be able to handle some pressure without pulling loose from its frame, so press on it a few times to be sure it's sturdily constructed. Hooks on the sieve frame opposite the handle should have a slight curve to help the sieve stay hooked over a bowl or pot.

### MEDIUM SIEVE

**Mesh size:**  $\frac{1}{16}$  inch.

**Used most for:** *Sifting, draining small batches of cooked vegetables, or straining out the lumps in thick sauces.*

### FINE SIEVE

**Mesh size:**  $\frac{1}{32}$  inch.

**Used most for:** *Refining texture and separating fine particles or seeds, such as for a fresh berry sauce.*

### SUPERFINE SIEVE, a.k.a. tea strainer

**Mesh size:** *So small you can barely see through it, let alone measure it.*

**Used most for:** *Dusting desserts with cocoa or confectioners' sugar.*





## cutting fresh corn off the cob

A steady hand and a sharp knife are all you need to cut corn kernels off the cob. A chef's knife is fine if you're comfortable with it, but a smaller knife works well, too.



**1** Cut the ear of corn in half crosswise. This gives you a flat surface on which to stand the pieces and reduces the length of the cob so the kernels don't have as far to fall and won't bounce as much.



**2** Stand a piece of corn on a cut end and slice down the length of the ear between the kernels and cob. Try to get as much of the kernel as you can, but don't cut too close to the cob or you'll have tough bits on the kernels. Rotate the cob and repeat until all the kernels are cut.

### gadget review

## Corn cutters are more trouble than they're worth

I've always been perfectly satisfied with the method of cutting corn off the cob described above, but out of curiosity, I tried several different corn cutter gadgets to see if they offered any advantage. Two of the models I tried were similar in design but made of different materials: metal and plastic (center and far right). I had to exert so much pressure on the cob to force it over the built-in knife part that I felt sure I was going to cut myself eventually, and the kernels didn't get cut neatly anyway. The other model (near right) worked slightly better, but I needed three hands to use it: one to hold the cob upright and stationary and two to hold either end of the gadget (as the package instructs) to work it back and forth down the cob. The bottom line: I'll just stick with my knife, thanks.



### food safety

## "Triple-washed" doesn't always mean clean

Lately I've found myself marveling at all the packaged, prepared fresh vegetables and fruits that are available in supermarkets these days. The good news about this trend is that there's some evidence that packaged veggies retain their nutrients better than their counterparts sold out in the open. But phrases on the packaging, like "triple-washed in spring water" and "ready to eat," encourage consumers to skip the step of washing the produce, and that's bad news for two reasons.

First, triple-washed produce isn't guaranteed to be free of dirt. I've washed grit out of many a bag of triple-washed spinach. Second, produce surfaces can carry bacteria that could make you ill, and the extra handling received by prepared produce increases the chances of contamination slipping in.

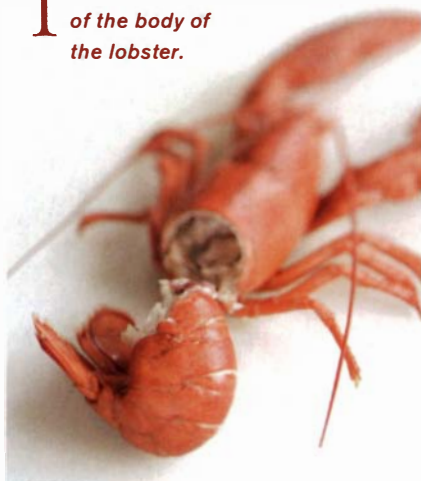
So whether it comes in a bag or not, and no matter how much of a hurry you're in, make the time to rinse all fresh produce well in water. If it makes sense for the item you're washing, scrub lightly with your hands or a vegetable brush. And don't forget to wash items like melons and avocados that have inedible skins. Even though you don't eat the skin, you do cut through it, and the knife blade can drag bacteria into the edible part.

# Getting to the meat of the lobster

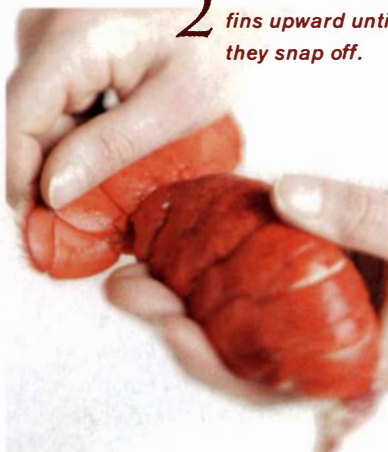
Getting the meat out of cooked lobster might seem a little intimidating, but it's really not very difficult. Just follow these steps. Once you're done, discard the remnants or save them in the freezer for making stock.

## The tail:

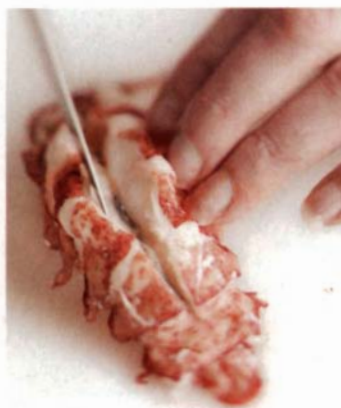
**1** Twist the tail off of the body of the lobster.



**2** Bend the tail fins upward until they snap off.



**3** Use a finger or a chopstick to push the tail meat out of the shell.



**4** Make a shallow incision down the center top of the tail to expose the intestinal tract. Flick out the tract with the knife tip, just like deveining a shrimp; discard.

## The knuckles:

**1** Separate the knuckles and claws from the body in one piece by twisting them off or cutting with shears. Separate the knuckles from the claws.



**2** Crack open the knuckles with the back of a chef's knife, or cut them open with shears. Remove the nuggets of meat.



## The claws:

**1** Bend the small part of the claw up and down until it snaps.



**2** Gently pull away this small shell, leaving the meat inside still attached to the big part of the claw.



**3** With shears or the back of a chef's knife, crack open the claw and remove the meat in one piece.



**4** If you don't see a wide fin of cartilage attached to the small shell (see #2), it's still in the claw meat. Pull or cut it out.

## Tips for buying and handling live lobsters

- ❖ **Compare lobsters of similar size.** If one is heavier than another, it's meatier.
- ❖ **Pick a frisky lobster.** When held by its body, it should flap its tail and wave its claws around. Avoid lethargic lobsters, as well as those with short antennae or with algae growing on them, signs of long storage.
- ❖ **Cook the lobster the same day you buy it.** Keep the lobster in its bag in the refrigerator until you cook it.
- ❖ **Don't blindly put your hand in the lobster bag.** Lobsters have spiny surfaces that can puncture your skin and cause infections. Instead, gently dump the lobster out of the bag.
- ❖ **Don't remove the claw bands until the lobster is cooked.** Those claws are sharp, and they'll cut if you get pinched.

## Pork butt: It's not what it sounds like

Despite the images conjured by its name, pork butt doesn't come from the rear end of a pig. It's actually from the other end—the shoulder—and is composed of the upper part of the front leg and the shoulder blade. Many supermarkets label it as a pork shoulder blade Boston roast, but you may also see it called Boston butt or Boston shoulder. Regardless of its name, this is the cut favored by sausage makers and Carolina barbecuers like Elizabeth Karmel (see p. 54) because its relatively high fat content—25% to 30%—bastes the meat during cooking, keeping it moist and juicy.



**tip:** To shape salad greens into tall stacks (as shown here and on p. 49), lightly dress the greens and pack them loosely in a clean plastic container; pints work well. Invert the container onto a salad plate, lift it away, and voilà—a statuesque salad.

tasting panel

# red-wine vinegar

**Y**ou might not give much thought to the bottle of red-wine vinegar in your pantry, but whether it's starring in a vinaigrette or just splashed into a sauce for brightness, vinegar actually has a big impact on the flavor of the finished dish. That's why we decided to find out which brands we like best. In a blind tasting of fourteen nationally available brands, eight *Fine Cooking* staffers tasted each vinegar alone and in a basic vinaigrette to evaluate the vinegar's aroma, flavor, and balance of acidity and sweetness. These six were our favorites.

—Kimberly Y. Masibay, associate editor



Top  
Pick

UNIO

\$3.99  
(17 ounces; 6% acidity)

Rich fruit flavor balanced with a big kick of mouth-watering acidity gave this vinegar lots of character and earned it the highest score. It delivered layers of flavor and a lingering tanginess that wasn't at all astringent.

Runners-up Vinegars shown in order of preference; prices may vary.



2 HEINZ

\$2.59  
(12 ounces; 5% acidity)

Bright, somewhat rounded, and fruity, this vinegar was puckeringly sour but not biting acidic. "I could drink this!" raved one taster. It was at its best in the vinaigrette, when oil muted the acidity, revealing nuances of wine and berries.



3 SPECTRUM  
NATURALS

\$4.29  
(16.9 ounces; 6% acidity)

Robust and tart, rounded out with a little oak and lots of fruit. The assertive finish packed a lemony wallop that pleased some tasters and left others crying "sour grapes." But it helped the vinegar shine in the vinaigrette.



4 COLAVITA

\$2.89  
(16.9 ounces; 6% acidity)

Zesty and rich with mellow cooked-fruit flavors; the sweetest of the bunch. Although it lacked the acetic brightness of the higher-scoring vinegars, it added fruitiness and a throat-tingling kick to the vinaigrette.



5 MAILLE

\$2.97  
(8.5 ounces; 7% acidity)

Mellow, deep, and quite complex; appealing notes of grapes, raisins, dried figs, wood, and wine. Despite its high acidity level, we wished for more brightness to balance the vinegar's almost savory richness.



6 POMPEIAN

\$1.99  
(16 ounces; 5% acidity)

Zippy and lightly fruity, with notes of ripe berry fruit and lingering tartness. Its delicate flavor was muted by the oil in the vinaigrette.

The other red-wine vinegars we tasted included Alessi, Eden Selected, Four Monks, Monari Federzoni, Progresso, Reese, Regina, and Star.



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# Whipping & cream into stable, airy foams

BY ANNE GARDINER & SUE WILSON

**H**ow often have you beaten egg whites for a recipe? Soufflés, meringues, angel food cakes, and chiffon pies all depend on airy whites for their loft. And what about whipping cream? Not only is it the secret to ethereally light mousse (like the one on p. 52), but whipped cream is also perfect for layering into strawberry shortcake, topping pie, or garnishing a simple ice-cream sundae.

As you whip egg whites or cream and the liquid billows into an airy mass, a similar transfor-

mation seems to occur in each. But plumes of whipped egg white and cream have less in common than you might think.

They are alike in one important way, however: They're both foams. Like soapsuds and the head on beer, beaten egg whites and whipped cream trap air in a soft network of stable bubbles.

## Protein and fat stabilize bubbles

When you blow air through a straw into a glass of water, bubbles form and quickly dis-

appear. But when you whisk air into egg whites or cream, bubbles form—and linger—because the proteins present in these viscous liquids stretch around bubbles and trap them.

Here's where the foams differ: In whipped egg whites, proteins alone do all the bubble building. In whipped cream, proteins share the task with another substance—fat. This important distinction influences how cooks use beaten egg whites and whipped cream in recipes, so let's take a closer look at how each forms.

**Egg whites trap bubbles in a web of water and protein.** Egg white is a mixture of protein (10%) and water. The action of beating creates bubbles and, at the same time, coaxes the coiled egg white proteins to uncurl and regroup into flexible mesh-like sheets that wrap around the

bubbles. With continued whipping, the bubbles get smaller, and the froth thickens into a stable mass.

**Fat: friend or foe?** Whipped egg whites can billow up to eight times their original volume. But a drop of yolk or a little grease lingering in a mixing bowl can reduce the egg whites' foaming power by two-thirds. That's because the fat bonds with the egg proteins before they can bond with one another and form those mesh-like protein sheets necessary for trapping bubbles.

While the tiniest speck of fat is the downfall of whipped egg whites, in whipped cream, solid butterfat works with milk protein to build foam. Whipping chilled cream not only reorders milk proteins into films for bubble building, but it also causes the microscopic clusters of solid butterfat that are suspended in the cold liquid to surround and stabilize each bubble. If the butterfat gets warm and melts, however, the foam will collapse.

## Foams are fussy

Egg whites whip to their greatest volume at about 70°F. When whites are warm, they don't cling together as much, making it easier to incorporate air. Cream, on the other hand, whips best when the cream, the bowl, and the whisk are very cold (45°F or

(Continued)

## Look the same...couldn't be more different

### Whipping egg whites vs. whipping cream

	TEMPERATURE	VOLUME	HOW TO HOLD	SIGNS OF OVERBEATING
<b>Egg whites</b>	about 70°F (to warm eggs, soak them in warm water for 10 minutes)	increase 6 to 8 times	not recommended	appear dry and lumpy; liquid separates out; hard to blend with other ingredients
	TEMPERATURE	VOLUME	HOW TO HOLD	SIGNS OF OVERBEATING
<b>Cream</b>	the colder the better, 33° to 45°F	increases 2 to 3 times	refrigerate, covered, in a cheesecloth- lined strainer, for up to 3 hours	no gloss, looks grainy and curdled



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Like soapsuds and the head on beer,  
beaten egg white and whipped cream  
hold air in a soft network of bubbles.

lower) and the butterfat is solid.

When it comes to choosing eggs for whipping, professional opinions differ. As eggs age, the whites become thinner and whip easily to great volume. Fresher eggs are more viscous so they take longer to beat, but some cooks think that the resulting foam is more stable. For making clouds of meringue in particular, we opt for older whites and extra volume and add a little cream of tartar to stabilize the foam.

With cream, it isn't age that affects fluffiness and stability, but fat content and temperature. Cream with more fat makes stiffer and more stable foam. Heavy cream, which is 36% to 40% fat, whips into stiff, stable foam; whipping cream, at 30% to 36% fat, makes a softer, less stable foam.

### How long to beat?

Recipes for soufflés and sponge cakes often say to whip the egg whites until soft peaks curl as you lift the beater. At this stage, the whites remain flexible, so they blend easily with other ingredients. But more important, the air bubbles are still elastic enough to expand in the oven. This allows the framework of a soufflé to stretch higher before its proteins coagulate and set in the heat of the oven.

For chilled or frozen desserts,

like mousses, where there will be no further cooking after the egg-white foam is added, creating a strong foam—as opposed to one that's flexible enough to expand further in the oven—is the primary consideration. So beat the whites to the stiff (but not dry) stage. At this stage, the foam contains more tiny bubbles, and there's strength in numbers.

**Use 'em or lose 'em.** Have you ever beaten whites to perfect medium-stiff peaks, turned away for a few moments to measure the other ingredients, and returned to find your foam looking dry, clumpy, and overbeaten? That's because egg-white foam exposed to air quickly begins to coagulate and lose its elasticity. So if you're beating egg whites to soft peaks without sugar for a cake or soufflé, be sure to have all the remaining ingredients ready to go and add them as soon as the whites are beaten.

**Overbeating makes foams flop.** Beating makes foams expand, but it can't go on indefinitely. If egg whites are whipped too long, the billowy foam becomes dry, clumpy, and too brittle to support a soufflé. Overbeaten cream poses another problem, as it separates into curds (butter) and whey (buttermilk).

Now that you know how foams work, the stage is set for the loftiest soufflés and lightest mousses you've ever made.

*Anne Gardiner and Sue Wilson teach classes on the chemistry of cooking. Together they wrote The Inquisitive Cook. ♦*

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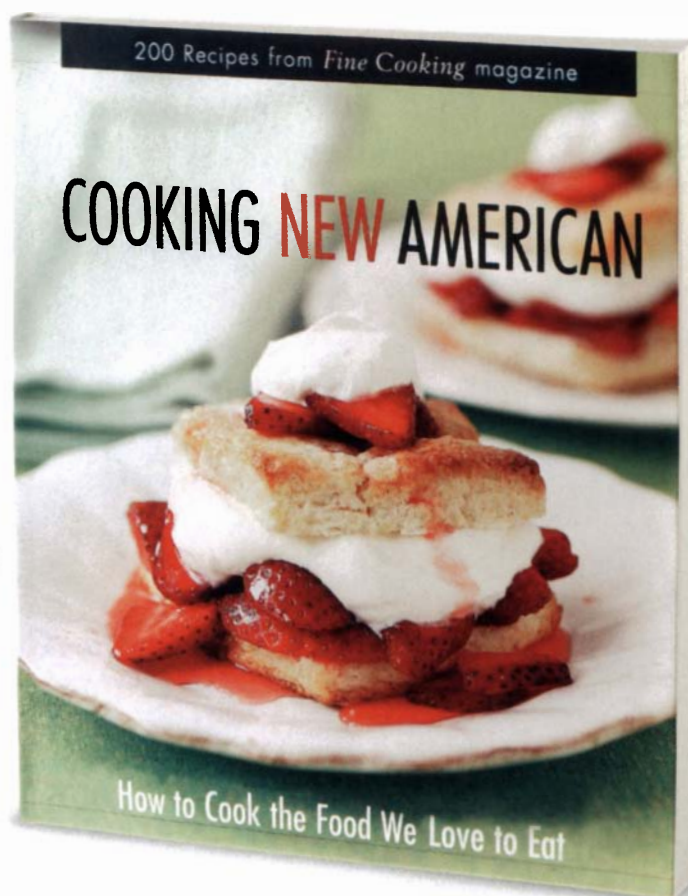
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#### FROM THE BACK COVER

Sonny's Gelatos are handmade, so their distribution is limited. They are sold at Crema Cafe in Minneapolis (612-822-8189), as well as at natural-foods and specialty groceries in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area. They are also available at some Whole Foods stores in the Chicago area.

#### In Season p. 16

'Kentucky Wonder', 'Kentucky Blue', 'Blue Lake', 'Provider', and 'Romano' are popular bean varieties that are easily found on seed racks and in catalogs. Good sources for filet beans include The Cook's Garden (800-457-9703; [www.cooksgarden.com](http://www.cooksgarden.com)) and Renee's Garden ([www.reneesgarden.com](http://www.reneesgarden.com), or call 888-880-7228 for a retailer near you). Dragon's Tongue yellow beans and purple beans are available from Greta's Organic Gardens ([www.seeds-organic.com](http://www.seeds-organic.com); 613-521-8648).

#### Pestos p. 40

When making pesto, your food processor blade should be sharp—a dull blade can bruise herbs. For new blades, visit Culinary Parts Unlimited (800-543-7549; [www.culinaryparts.com](http://www.culinaryparts.com)), which specializes in replacement parts for kitchen tools and appliances.

#### Q&A p. 24

For hardwood chips, see the source listed under Barbecued Pulled Pork at right. They're also sold in many hardware stores.

#### Equipment p. 28

Tall French jelly glasses can double as containers for blending



#### Chicken Salad Milanese p. 48

For pounding out chicken cutlets, we like this Leifheit reversible meat pounder, \$20 at Williams-Sonoma ([www.williams-sonoma.com](http://www.williams-sonoma.com); 877-812-6235). It has a clever reversible disk, so you get a flat surface for pounding and a pointed one for tenderizing, all in one tool.

small quantities. At Crate & Barrel ([www.crateandbarrel.com](http://www.crateandbarrel.com); 800-967-6696) they're \$1.95 apiece.

#### Chef vs. Chef p. 45

To buy live lobsters, visit [Mainelobsterdirect.com](http://Mainelobsterdirect.com) (800-556-2783). Before you purchase, the site will offer a price quote based on the size of the lobsters and the shipping location.

Both Pascal Sauton and Jean-Pierre Moullé recommend fleur de sel, a delicate French sea salt, for seasoning fresh, uncooked summer produce. To purchase it, visit Saltworks ([www.seasalt.com](http://www.seasalt.com)) or Sur La Table (800-243-0852; [www.surlatable.com](http://www.surlatable.com)); prices for a 4.4-ounce container range from \$9 to \$10.95.

#### Berry Mousse p. 50

You can buy straight-sided ramekins for making individual berry mousses at most kitchen stores, or go to Cooking.com (800-663-8810). Look for ramekins with a 4- to 6-ounce capacity.

#### Roasted Tomatoes p. 59

Look for rimmed baking sheets (also often called jelly roll pans) at A Cooks Wares (800-915-9788; [www.cookswares.com](http://www.cookswares.com)), which carries several brands, starting at \$14.



#### Barbecued Pulled Pork p. 54

A few items can be really handy when grilling with indirect heat. To monitor your grill's temperature, choose a spring-coil oven thermometer; they're available at kitchenware stores and in some hardware stores.

We like the Burnguard oven mitt (\$24.99), which is flame resistant and protects hands from hot liquids, steam, and oil, too. It's available at Chef's Catalog ([www.chefscatalog.com](http://www.chefscatalog.com); 800-884-2433).

To hold hardwood chips while gas grilling, you can use small disposable aluminum pans that are sold in most supermarkets. We also like the Western Reusable Smoker Tray, which comes packed with wood chips; \$2.95 at [www.barbecue-store.com](http://www.barbecue-store.com). The site also carries many varieties of hardwood chips.







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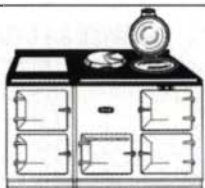
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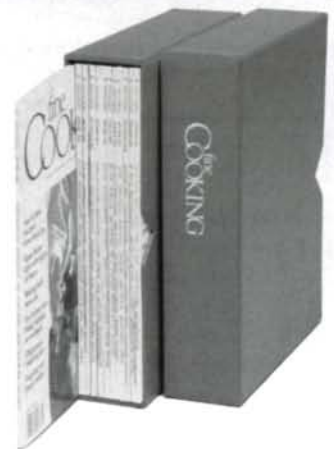
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Recipe	Page	Calories		Protein	Carb	Fats (g)				Chol	Sodium	Fiber	Notes
(analysis per serving)		total	from fat	(g)	(g)	total	sat	mono	poly	(mg)	(mg)	(g)	
<b>In Season</b>	16												
Simply Delicious Green Beans		80	50	2	8	5	1	3	1	0	150	4	based on 4 servings
<b>Grilled Pizza Party</b>	34												
Pizza Dough		320	80	9	53	8	1	6	1	0	590	5	based on 8 servings
Olive Tapenade		80	70	1	2	8	1	6	1	5	220	1	per 2 tablespoons
Roasted Vidalia Onions		110	40	2	17	4	1	2	1	5	340	4	per ½ cup
Roasted Red Pepper Purée		90	80	1	4	9	1	6	1	0	290	1	per ¼ cup
Roasted Garlic		15	10	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	per tablespoon
<b>Pesto</b>	40												
Walnut-Parsley Pesto		280	240	7	4	27	6	13	8	10	490	2	per ¼ cup
Fettuccine with Green Beans & Walnut-Parsley Pesto		500	200	18	60	22	5	10	7	10	850	6	based on 6 servings
Basil Pesto		300	270	6	6	30	4	19	6	0	440	3	per ¼ cup
Roasted Cod with Basil Pesto & Garlic Breadcrumbs		440	260	32	15	29	4	19	6	65	1200	3	based on 4 servings
Black Olive & Mint Pesto		160	140	1	7	15	2	12	1	0	660	1	per ¼ cup
Warm Roasted Potato Salad with Black Olive & Mint Pesto		340	170	5	41	18	3	13	2	0	920	5	based on 4 servings
Sun-Dried Tomato & Chipotle Pesto		80	60	1	4	7	1	4	2	0	580	1	per 2 tablespoons
Broiled Pork Chops with Sun-Dried Tomato & Chipotle Pesto		510	330	33	14	36	10	21	4	100	2270	3	based on 4 servings
<b>Chef vs. Chef</b>	45												
Tomato, Corn & Basil Salad with Lobster		490	280	19	39	31	4	22	4	45	860	6	based on 4 servings
Chilled Tomato Soup with Crab Salad & Pistou		520	370	16	26	41	6	30	4	40	880	4	based on 4 servings
<b>Chicken Milanese</b>	48												
Chicken Milanese		700	350	39	47	39	12	21	5	210	1760	3	based on 2 servings
<b>Summer Berry Mousse</b>	50												
Raspberry & Blackberry Mousse		250	90	5	36	10	5	3	1	135	65	5	based on 6 servings
<b>Barbecued Pork</b>	54												
North Carolina Style Pulled Pork		490	200	40	30	22	7	11	3	130	1400	1	per sandwich, based on 10 serving
Lexington Style Barbecue Sauce		100	0	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	1580	1	per ½ cup
North Carolina Coleslaw		80	0	2	22	0	0	0	0	0	820	4	per cup
South Carolina Style Honey-Mustard Sauce		140	40	1	27	5	1	2	2	0	650	1	per ¼ cup
Kansas City Style Sweet Cola Barbecue Sauce		120	40	1	22	4	2	1	1	10	500	1	per ¼ cup
<b>Slow-Roasted Tomatoes</b>	59												
Slow-Roasted Summer Tomatoes		70	30	1	5	5	1	3	1	0	290	1	per tomato half
Lemon-Sherry Vinaigrette with Roasted Tomato Oil		90	80	0	1	9	1	7	1	0	70	0	per tablespoon
<b>Updated Fruit Desserts</b>	62												
Apple Brown Betty with Rustic Crumbs		370	110	3	60	12	7	3	1	30	280	5	based on 9 servings
Plum Grunt with Swirled Biscuit Topping		310	90	3	53	10	6	3	0	25	150	2	based on 12 servings
Spiced Peach-Blueberry Pandowdy		260	100	3	39	12	6	4	1	45	120	4	based on 10 servings
Apricot-Raspberry Buckle		370	180	4	44	20	12	6	1	115	210	3	based on 10 servings
<b>Quick &amp; Delicious</b>	82c												
Grilled Pork Tenderloin with Salsa Verde		530	380	35	4	42	7	26	8	100	690	2	based on 3 servings
Tortellini with Artichokes, Roasted Peppers & Olives		770	330	26	77	36	12	20	4	60	1680	4	based on 4 servings
Lamb Chops Crusted with Fennel & Black Pepper		560	370	45	2	41	16	20	4	170	720	1	based on 4 servings
Grilled Chicken & Mushroom Yakitori		400	120	34	33	13	4	5	3	110	2080	0	based on 4 servings
Sautéed Shrimp with Red Pepper, Carrot & Napa Slaw		170	60	17	9	6	1	0	0	135	620	2	based on 10 servings
Balsamic Portabella Salad with Goat Cheese		380	310	10	12	34	7	23	3	20	780	3	based on 4 servings
Cajun Swordfish with Quick Creamy Rémoulade Sauce		470	330	32	2	35	6	11	16	85	950	1	based on 2 servings

The nutritional analyses have been calculated by a registered dietitian at The Food Consulting Company of Del Mar, California. When a recipe gives a choice of ingredients, the first choice is the one used in the

calculations. Optional ingredients and those listed without a specific quantity are not included. When a range of ingredient amounts or servings is given, the smaller amount or portion is used. When the

quantity of salt and pepper aren't specified, the analysis is based on ¼ teaspoon salt and ½ teaspoon pepper per serving for entrées, and ½ teaspoon salt and ¼ teaspoon pepper per serving for side dishes.



SINCE 1897  
**Dickinson's®**

## AN OVERNIGHT SUCCESS STORY, 100 YEARS IN THE MAKING

For many years, *Dickinson's Preserves* remained something of a well-kept secret, once served in only the finest hotels and restaurants. Thanks to delighted guests, the word spread and demand grew. *Dickinson's* began offering their specialty preserves to grocers and gourmet food stores. Today, *Dickinson's* is one of America's favorite gourmet preserves. Yet our secret to success is the same as in 1897: **Purely The Finest®** fruit from the Pacific Northwest.

## EXTRAORDINARY RECIPES, EXTRAORDINARILY EASY!

### Easy Lemon-Berry Dessert Topping



1/2 jar Dickinson's® Lemon Curd  
1/2 jar Dickinson's® Pure Seedless Black Raspberry Preserves  
1 8-oz. pkg. Cream Cheese, softened  
Optional: Berries, fresh or frozen

Puree all ingredients together. Refrigerate for 1 hr. Makes about 2 cups. **SERVING IDEAS:** Serve over your favorite angel food, pound or cheese cake. Use filling in chocolate or pastry cups. Try creating your own dessert masterpiece...pour sauce into a squeeze bottle and swirl onto dessert plate and over your dessert for an elegant, picture-perfect treat!



### Strawberry Lemon Frost Shakes



1 jar Dickinson's® Pure Seedless Pacific Mountain® Strawberry Preserves  
3/4 jar Dickinson's® Lemon Curd  
1 c. Plain Yogurt  
1/2 c. Apple Juice  
4 Ice Cubes

Optional: Strawberries, fresh or frozen  
Combine all ingredients in a blender container and process until frothy. Divide into two stemmed glasses and garnish with strawberries. Makes 2 servings.

Try substituting your favorite Dickinson's® flavor!



### Citrus Chicken with Raspberry Sauce



#### Marinade:

1 jar Dickinson's® Lemon or Lime Curd  
8 oz. Plain Yogurt  
3 Tbsp. Cilantro, chopped  
1 sm. Jalapeno Pepper, seeded & chopped  
1 tsp. Salt  
6 Chicken Breast Halves, skinless, boneless

In a medium bowl combine Curd, yogurt, cilantro, jalapeno and salt; blend well. Marinate chicken for 4 hrs. or overnight. Discard marinade. Grill chicken until it is no longer pink. Stir together Preserves and lime juice and drizzle over chicken. Serve immediately. Makes 6 servings.

#### Sauce:

1 jar Dickinson's® Pure Seedless Cascade Mountain™ Red Raspberry Preserves  
2 Tbsp. Lime Juice



### Raspberry Lemon Trifle



1 jar Dickinson's® Pure Seedless Cascade Mountain™ Red Raspberry Preserves  
1 jar Dickinson's® Lemon Curd  
1 lg. box Instant Vanilla Pudding Mix  
1 c. Milk  
1 10"-rd. Angel Food Cake  
1 8-oz. container Whipped Topping  
Optional: Raspberries, fresh or frozen

Tear cake into small pieces, set aside. Mix pudding & milk, then fold in Curd; set aside. Put a layer of cake pieces (about 1/3) on the bottom of a trifle dish or deep glass dish. Stir Preserves with a spoon to soften, then spoon 1/3 on top of the 1st cake layer, then top with 1/3 of the Curd mixture & 1/3 whipped topping. Repeat layering until all of the cake is used up. Refrigerate for 2 hrs. Garnish with optional raspberries. Makes 10-12 servings.



For more fruitful recipes, serving & seasonal ideas or product information, visit us online at [www.dickinsonsfamily.com](http://www.dickinsonsfamily.com) or call 1-800-JELLIES.

TRADITIONAL PRESERVES PURELY FRUIT® SPREADABLE FRUIT ORGANIC FRUIT SPREADS FRUIT BUTTERS FRUIT CURDS RELISHES PEPPER SPREADS



The remarkable Multi-Melon sorbet that Ron Siron and Carrie Gustafson make at Sonny's Ice Cream in Minneapolis, Minnesota, went through many trials before it came out just right. Sticklers for flavor and obsessed with purity, the couple make their sorbets and ice creams in tiny five-gallon lots—puréeing ingredients by hand, test-tasting constantly—and they insist on organic produce that's local whenever possible. When milk is used, it's only that from a small, organic, family dairy in western Minnesota. "Know your sources and buy local" is becoming our mantra," says Ron. Though he and Carrie thrive on

## fresh fruit sorbet

perfecting inventive flavors like cucumber-mint and cherry-Zinfandel, classics like chocolate and raspberry get their exacting attention as well.

The two seem fated to meet and make great ice cream. While Ron learned the craft from his father, Sonny (who still works with them every day), Carrie, meanwhile, had set off for Italy to learn to make gelato. She met Ron upon her return, and the two couldn't stop talking about food, flavor, and ice cream. (It also turns out they have the same birthday). "From there," they agree, "it was destiny."

—Amy Albert, senior editor ♦

*From the top: Prepping, puréeing, tasting, scooping. For more information, see p. 78.*





BY DAVID BONOM

## Flavorful pantry staples

lend themselves well to these light, easy, and fast summer dishes. Ground spices, balsamic vinegar, olive oil, Dijon mustard, and honey not only enhance the flavor of these recipes, but are usually on hand in any kitchen. So reach in your cabinets and pull out what you need, but be sure that your pantry ingredients are fresh: Whole spices can be stored for up to five years, while ground spices tend to lose their potency after about a year. Oils, if stored properly, can last up to six months. Light causes oxidation and can quickly diminish or damage the flavors of both spices and oils, so be sure to keep them in a cool, dry, dark place.



## Grilled Pork Tenderloin with Salsa Verde

*Serves two to three.*

**1 pork tenderloin (about 1 lb.)**  
**½ cup plus 1 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**  
**¼ tsp. dried oregano**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**1 cup packed fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves, washed and spun dry**  
**¼ cup shelled walnuts**  
**1 small clove garlic**  
**2 Tbs. capers, drained**  
**1 Tbs. fresh lemon juice**  
**1 tsp. Dijon mustard**  
**1 oil-packed anchovy fillet, rinsed and patted dry**

Heat a gas grill to medium or prepare a medium-hot charcoal fire. Trim the pork of any excess fat and silverskin. Rub the pork with 1 Tbs. of the oil, the oregano, ½ tsp. salt, and ¼ tsp. pepper. Set the pork on the hottest part of the grill and close the lid. Grill, covered, turning once, until an instant-read thermometer

inserted into the center of the pork registers 140° to 145°F, about 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer the pork to a clean cutting board and let rest for 5 minutes.

While the pork is on the grill, combine the remaining ⅓ cup oil, the parsley, walnuts, garlic, capers, lemon juice, mustard, and anchovy in a blender. Pulse the mixture until it forms a coarse paste, about five or six pulses. (This salsa verde may be made a day ahead, covered, and refrigerated. Bring it to room temperature before serving.)

Slice the pork thinly and serve with the salsa verde spooned over it.

### Serving suggestion:

**Serve with a salad of Bibb lettuce and avocado.**



## Tortellini with Artichokes, Roasted Peppers & Olives

*Serves four.*

**6 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**  
**1 can (14 oz.) artichoke hearts, drained, quartered, and patted dry**  
**1 jar (7 oz.) roasted red peppers, drained, patted dry, and cut into ¼-inch slices**  
**1 lb. frozen cheese tortellini**  
**1 medium onion, thinly sliced**  
**1½ tsp. dried oregano**  
**12 cloves garlic, thinly sliced**  
**½ cup dry white wine**  
**½ cup Kalamata olives, pitted and halved**  
**1 cup crumbled feta (about 4½ oz.)**

Put a large pot of salted water on to boil.

Heat 2 Tbs. of the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat; add the artichoke hearts and the roasted peppers. Cook the vegetables, stirring occasionally, until they start to brown slightly, 4 to 5 minutes. Transfer to a bowl.

Put the tortellini in the boiling water and cook, stirring

occasionally until tender, 7 to 8 minutes or as indicated on the package.

While the tortellini cooks, heat 2 Tbs. of the oil in the same skillet used for the vegetables, and add the onion and oregano; cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is light gold, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in the remaining 2 Tbs. oil and the garlic; cook until the garlic is light golden, another 2 to 3 minutes. Add the wine, bring it to a boil and cook until reduced by about half, 1 to 2 minutes. If the tortellini isn't finished cooking, remove the skillet from the heat.

Drain the tortellini and add it to the skillet with the artichoke mixture and the olives; heat through, tossing over low heat until well mixed. Remove from the heat and stir in the feta.



## Lamb Chops Crusted with Fennel & Black Pepper

*Serves four.*

**2 tsp. fennel seeds, lightly crushed**  
**1¼ tsp. ground coriander**  
**1 tsp. dried rosemary, chopped**  
**1 tsp. kosher salt**  
**¾ tsp. garlic powder**  
**¾ tsp. freshly cracked black pepper**  
**8 lamb loin chops, about 1 inch thick (4 to 5 oz. each)**  
**1½ Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil**

Position a rack 4 inches from the broiler element and heat the broiler to high.

In a small bowl, combine the fennel seeds, coriander, rosemary, salt, garlic powder, and pepper; mix well. Brush the lamb chops with the olive oil to coat. Press an equal amount of the spice mix on

both sides of the chops and let them sit for 10 minutes.

Coat a broiler pan with oil or nonstick cooking spray. Set the lamb chops on the pan and broil until the first side is well browned, about 5 minutes. Flip the chops and continue to cook until the second side is well browned and the center is cooked to your liking (cut into a chop near the bone to check), about another 5 minutes for medium rare.

### Serving suggestion:

**Serve with vegetable couscous and sautéed cherry tomatoes.**





## Grilled Chicken & Mushroom Yakitori

*Serves four.*

**6 Tbs. soy sauce**  
**6 Tbs. mirin (rice wine)**  
**6 Tbs. honey**  
**1½ Tbs. unseasoned rice vinegar**  
**1½ Tbs. finely minced fresh ginger**  
**1 Tbs. minced garlic (about 3 medium cloves)**  
**1½ lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs (about 6)**  
**3 to 4 scallions (white and green parts), trimmed**  
**16 small white mushrooms (about 6 oz.), wiped clean**  
**8 bamboo skewers (8 to 12 inches), soaked in water for at least 20 minutes**  
**Vegetable or olive oil for the grill**

Heat a gas grill to medium or prepare a medium-hot charcoal fire.

Combine the soy sauce, mirin, honey, rice vinegar, ginger, and garlic in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce the heat to medium and gently boil until the mixture is slightly syrupy and reduced to about  $\frac{2}{3}$  cup, 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and divide the glaze into two containers.

While the glaze cooks, trim the chicken of excess fat. Cut the chicken thighs crosswise

(across the grain) into  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch wide pieces (about 24 total). Cut the scallions into 2-inch pieces (you'll need 16 pieces). Fold each piece of chicken in half and thread three pieces of chicken onto the skewers, alternating with two scallions and two mushrooms (one of each between the chicken strips).

Brush oil on the grill grates and set the skewers on the hottest part of the grill. Grill until dark grill marks form on the first side, about 6 minutes. Flip the skewers and brush generously with half of the glaze. Continue to cook until the second side is well marked and the chicken is cooked through, another 5 to 6 minutes. Flip the skewers and brush the remaining glaze on the second side. Serve immediately.

### Serving suggestion:

**Serve with vegetable fried rice or steamed white rice.**

**Tip:** For better stability, thread the chicken and scallions on two parallel skewers, instead of just one.



## Sautéed Shrimp with Red Pepper, Carrot & Napa Slaw

*Serves six as a light entrée; eight to ten as a side salad.*

**3 Tbs. seasoned rice vinegar**  
**5 tsp. granulated sugar**  
**4 tsp. fish sauce**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**1 small head Napa cabbage (about 1½ lb.), halved, cored, and sliced crosswise very thinly**  
**2 medium carrots, peeled and grated**  
**1 large red bell pepper, seeded and very thinly sliced**  
**4 scallions (white and green parts), trimmed and thinly sliced on the diagonal**  
 **$\frac{1}{3}$  cup chopped lightly salted peanuts**  
**2 Tbs. toasted sesame oil**  
**2 lb. large or jumbo shrimp, peeled and deveined**

In a small saucepan, combine the vinegar, sugar, fish sauce, and  $\frac{1}{8}$  tsp. salt; stir over low heat until the sugar dissolves. Set aside to cool slightly. In a large bowl, combine the cabbage, carrots, bell pepper, and scallions; toss well. Pour the vinegar mixture over the cabbage and mix well to com-

bine. Toss in the peanuts. Let sit, stirring occasionally, for about 20 minutes.

In a large nonstick skillet, heat 1 Tbs. of the sesame oil over medium-high heat. Toss the shrimp with  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt and  $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. pepper. Put half the shrimp in the skillet and sauté until opaque throughout, about 3 minutes. Transfer the cooked shrimp to a clean bowl. Repeat with the remaining 1 Tbs. oil and the other half of the shrimp. Toss the shrimp into the slaw and serve.

### Ingredient note:

**Seasoned rice vinegar is rice vinegar with added sweeteners and salt. Don't confuse it with plain rice vinegar or flavored varieties of seasoned rice vinegar. Look for a bottle that's labeled "original", "natural" or "plain seasoned."**



## Balsamic Portabella Salad with Goat Cheese

*Serves four as a light lunch.*

**3 oil-packed anchovy fillets, drained**  
**3 Tbs. balsamic vinegar**  
**1½ Tbs. finely chopped shallots**  
**3 tsp. Dijon mustard**  
**1 tsp. dried marjoram**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**½ cup extra-virgin olive oil**  
**4 large portabella mushrooms (about 1 lb.)**  
**4 oz. (6 cups loosely packed) mixed baby greens**  
**1½ cups cherry tomatoes, halved**  
**½ cup crumbled goat cheese (about 3 oz.)**

Position a rack 4 inches from the broiler element and heat the broiler to high.

In a medium bowl, mash the anchovy fillets with a fork or a wooden spoon until they form a paste. Stir in the vinegar, shallots, mustard, marjoram, ¾ tsp. salt, and ⅛ tsp. pepper until well blended. Slowly whisk in the oil.

Wipe the mushrooms clean with a paper towel. Remove and discard the stems. Use a spoon to scrape out and discard the mushroom gills. Brush the mushroom caps with 4 Tbs. of the

dressing, and sprinkle with ¼ tsp. salt and ⅛ tsp. pepper. Set the caps, gill side up, on a rimmed baking sheet. Broil until the caps start to soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Flip them and continue to broil until they're well browned and tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer the caps to a cutting board and cut into ¼-inch slices.

In a large bowl, combine the baby greens and cherry tomatoes; add 6 Tbs. of the dressing and toss well to coat. To serve, set equal portions of the greens and tomatoes on dinner plates and arrange the mushroom slices on top. Drizzle each salad with about 1 Tbs. of the remaining dressing. Sprinkle with the crumbled goat cheese and serve.

### Serving suggestion:

**Serve with toasted slices of sourdough bread rubbed with a garlic clove and the cut side of a tomato.**



## Cajun Swordfish with Quick, Creamy Rémoulade Sauce

*Serves two.*

**¼ cup mayonnaise**  
**1 tsp. whole-grain mustard**  
**1 tsp. prepared horseradish, squeezed dry with a paper towel**  
**1 tsp. capers, rinsed, drained, and chopped**  
**¾ tsp. hot paprika**  
**¾ tsp. dried thyme**  
**¾ tsp. dried oregano**  
**½ tsp. garlic powder**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper**  
**2 swordfish steaks, ½ inch thick (6 to 8 oz. each), trimmed of any skin or dark flesh**  
**1 Tbs. vegetable oil**

In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, mustard, horseradish, and capers; stir until well blended.

In another small bowl, combine the paprika, thyme, oregano, garlic powder, ½ tsp. salt, and ⅛ tsp. pepper. Brush the swordfish with 1 tsp. of the oil. Spread equal amounts of the paprika mixture onto both sides of

the swordfish and let sit for 10 minutes.

In a large cast-iron or heavy-duty skillet, heat the remaining 2 tsp. oil over medium-high heat until very hot. Add the swordfish and cook until well browned, 4 to 5 minutes. Flip the swordfish and continue to cook until the fish is cooked through (cut into it to check) and the second side is well browned, another 3 to 5 minutes. Serve with the rémoulade sauce.

### Serving suggestion:

**Serve with rice and red beans.**

**Tip: This recipe can be doubled, but you'll need to use two pans for the fish.**

*After cooking for years in top restaurants like New York's Union Square Café and Savoy, David Bonom is now a freelance recipe developer and restaurant critic. ♦*